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THE SPANISH PIRATE OR THE TERROR OF THE OCEAN.



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THE
SPANISH PIRATE;

OR, THE

TERROR OF THE OCEAN.

LONDON :

THE GENERAL PUBLISHING COMPANY,
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THE SPANISH PIRATE ; OR, THE TERROR OF THE OCEAN.

CHAPTER I.

PIRACY in all ages of the world has been regarded as one of the most horrible and wicked offences of any in the catalogue of human crimes. It has struck more terror into the hearts of people than any single transgression known to the laws of all civilised countries.

Our story dates back to a period several years previous to the revolutionary war which finally resulted in a separation of the colonies from the mother country.

An old fisherman by the name of Rockwood lived in a rudely constructed, but quite comfortable house, on the black shore of the Atlantic, not far distant from the spot on which a hotel now stands at Nahant. At that time this fisherman's lodge was the only dwelling house in that place. For upwards of twenty years he had resided in this truly romantic spot, much more wild and romantic than it is now, for the land was then covered with a thick growth of trees of various kinds, making a cool and refreshing shade in the summer, and guarding his habitation from the north wind.

in the winter. At the time our narrative commences, his wife was dead, and he was left with two lovely daughters, twin sisters, some few months under twenty years of age. Their names were Lucretia and Margaret, and two more beautiful, lively, animated creatures could not be found on the whole Atlantic coast. As might well be supposed, they were the idols of their father, especially since the lamented death of their mother, who died when they were about twelve years old.

Margaret and Lucretia occasionally accompanied their father on his fishing excursions, and then would come the trial between the sisters to see which could catch the most of the largest fish. It was delightful to the old man to see the anxiety of his daughters when they were trying their skill with a hook and line. He often remarked that he never discovered any rivalry between them except on these occasions. At other times they never betrayed the least anxiety to excel each other, but what was one's will was another's. Brought up upon the sea shore from earliest infancy, they loved the ocean and its scenes.

One morning in the summer, when the air was very mild, they seated themselves upon a rock near the shore, where their father kept his fishing boat, to watch him as he was preparing to go out on the water. Soon he got ready, and pushed his boat from the shore. There was a slight breeze from the south-west —just enough to fill his sail and glide his little smack over the ripples.

“How beautiful father's boat glides over the

water this morning!" said Lucretia. "It would have been a fine time for us to take a sail. But then, sister, you don't feel very anxious to try your skill with me very soon again, as I beat you so much the last time we were out."

"I'm not afraid to try with you again," replied Margaret. "I caught the largest cod-fish the last time we were out. Besides, I hooked the largest halibut either of us ever caught. It will take a good many codfishes to come up to that."

"You didn't catch him alone, for father helped you," said Lucretia.

"To be sure he did, and didn't he always help you when you hooked one of them?" replied Margaret. "Remember, I played the hook so skilfully that I induced him to bite. In that lies the skill."

"See there!" said Lucretia. "There comes one I've caught worth more than every halibut in the ocean. Think you I didn't play my hook well when I induced him to bite?"

Margaret looked in the direction her sister pointed, and saw Horace Malcolm on his way towards them.

Young Malcolm was a noble-hearted sailor about twenty-five years of age, straight as a mast, and full of life and action. He had on his shore dress, blue broadcloth jacket and trousers, with bright buttons. He was a finely formed fellow, and generous as he was handsome. Lucretia had been engaged to him more than a year, and two more sincere and ardent lovers could not be found.

"You did well when you got Horace into

your net, sister," replied Margaret. "I freely give you credit for your skill in that movement. Perhaps I shall be as fortunate as you have been, one of these days. There are more sailors than one in Boston."

"Well, sister, I hope you will," said Lucretia.

Young Malcolm now approached, and bid them a good morning.

"That's your father's boat out there, is it not?" he inquired.

"It is," replied Lucretia. "It is a fine day to be upon the water. Margaret and I were just speaking about it when you came in sight."

"I wish I had come a little sooner, we would have all gone out together and tried our luck," said Horace. "I remember the last time before now I was at home, that we had some real sport catching the haddock."

"Yes, and if my memory serves me correctly, I believe I caught more than you and Lucretia both," said Margaret, smiling.

"That is true," said Horace. "I will give you credit for that, Margaret."

"Don't you know any of your shipmates who would make a good beau for me?" inquired Margaret. "Sister brags so much that I believe I must spread out my net and see if I can't find some good fellow to run into it."

"Yes, Margaret. I'm acquainted with several generous-hearted fellows who would jump at the chance of running into your net if you should set one for them," he replied. "There is one young sailor I'm acquainted

with who would fill your eye exactly, I think. I just named the thing to him the other day, and he will call with me after we make another voyage. He is going in the same ship with me this time. We have never sailed together."

"Why didn't he come with you now?" asked Margaret, laughing. "He may lose the chance before you return from your voyage. Some other fellow may come along."

"None you would have, I'm thinking," he answered. "I reckon you are somewhat particular in your notions about the young men."

"Perhaps so; but what's the young sailor's name you intend to introduce to me?"

"Ah! it is just as I thought it would be, Margaret," replied Malcolm, smiling. "I was sure you would wish to know his name and the colour of his eyes. Well, you shall be told all about him. In the first place, he's a first-rate sailor—in the second place, he has black eyes, and curling hair—thirdly, he's handsome all over—and fourthly and lastly, his name is William Turell."

"There, there, Horace, that's enough in all conscience," said Margaret, bursting out in loud laughter. "You mustn't say more about him until I see him, because it would be a sad affair if I should fall in love with him before I see him."

"Are you really in earnest, Horace?" inquired Lucretia.

"Certainly I am," he replied. "I'm not joking. Soon as we return from our next voy-

age, I intend to have him accompany me here directly."

"I'm really glad of it, for when sister gets a beau, I hope she won't envy me so much," said Lucretia, laughing.

"Envy you!" repeated Margaret. "Why, I could get your beau away from you now if I were disposed to do it; but sister, don't be alarmed. I will reserve my powers till Horace brings along Mr Turell—yes, the black-eyed William Turell. Why can't you come down with him before you embark on your voyage, so that I might have him to dream about when you and he are far away on the ocean."

"I have no time for that before I start," he replied.

"When do you think of going?" inquired Lucretia.

"Next day after to-morrow," he answered. Lucretia looked sorrowful, but made no reply. Her heart was too full for utterance. During their courtship she had experienced several parting scenes with her young sailor, and every succeeding one was more painful.

"I believe I shall not have a sailor for my beau, but take one who keeps on the land all the time, and then there will be no danger of his being drowned, and I can see him often," said Margaret.

"You might become sick of him if you were with him all the time," said Horace. "Nothing like a voyage to sea to make one love hard. I have had experience enough to know that for the ~~last~~ three or four years. Don't you think I have, Lucretia? Come, don't be

cast down. I intend to be back again in the course of next spring."

"That's a good while to be gone," said Lucretia, thoughtfully. "But I could endure the time of your absence if I were sure you would return again. I heard father say a pirate vessel had recently been seen off the coast. And O, Horace, if you should be taken by the pirates, I don't know what I should do."

"Our captain is prepared to give the black scoundrels fight if they attempt to attack us," he answered. "Our vessel is to be armed more than usual. We shall have four large guns, and small arms enough for every hand on board. Then if they attack us, we shall endeavour to send back as good as they give us."

"But they may be more numerous than you are, and have larger guns," she said.

"We must run our chance for that," he replied. "In the first place, they would have a hard race to overtake us; for our vessel is the fastest sailer that goes out of Boston; so that we shall be on pretty safe footing."

"Ah! Horace, I can't bear the thought of those monsters in human shape," said Lucretia. "They make a sailor's life a dangerous one, to say nothing of the storms at sea and other perils of the ocean. I wish you might never go to sea again, but find some other employment."

"Perhaps I may in a year or two," he replied.

The young sailor tarried nearly all day with his beloved one, until her father returned from his fishing excursion. He then took a parting

kiss with Lucretia, bidding her, the old fisherman, and Margaret, a hearty farewell, and started off to make himself ready for his intended voyage.

CHAPTER II.

“DON’T you think, father, there’s danger in going to sea now on account of the ugly pirates ?” inquired Lucretia, the next morning after young Malcolm had taken his parting kiss, as she, Margaret, and their father were sitting at the breakfast table.

“There’s always more or less danger on the seas,” replied Mr Rockwood.

“I know there is,” she answered ; “but isn’t there more danger now since a pirate vessel has lately been seen off the coast ?”

“There are always pirates cruising about the seas as well as robbers prowling over the land,” said her father. “That piratical vessel, which chased the brig the other day, may now be two or three hundred miles distant from us. They don’t tarry long in one place ; for they are afraid some Government ship will be after them. The rascals keep a pretty sharp lookout for their own necks. You needn’t be so much alarmed, Lucretia or Horace told me he had shipped for this voyage with a smart crew, and that the vessel would be well armed.”

“I’m sometimes glad I’ve no beau, when I hear Lucretia express so many fears about the safety of hers,” said Margaret. “The less objects of endearment we have about us the less anxiety and trouble we have.”

"That's right, Margaret," said the father. "I don't see how I could spare both of you. I should have nobody to cook my fish after I had caught them."

"Well, father, I will stay with you, unless William Turell, whom Horace will bring here after his return from his voyage, should happen to strike my fancy," said Margaret, laughing.

"I reckon I must forbid Horace's introducing the young sailor, else I shall lose you as well as Lucretia," replied the old fisherman.

"O, I and William too can live with you, if I should be smitten with the dark eyes and curling hair Horace talks so much about," said Margaret, laughing, and looking very cunningly into her sister's face.

"I reckon there are two sides to that question," said Lucretia. "Suppose father should not like your young William? What would you do then?"

"Go to Boston and live," replied Margaret. "If I love him when I see him, I shall marry him of course. Father would not be so cruel as to be willing to see my heart break."

"No danger of your heart breaking so long as you're so cheerful and lively as you are now," said her father.

Since Lucretia had become engaged to Horace Malcolm, she was more serious and thoughtful than Margaret, but before that event in her life happened, there was but little, if any, difference in their dispositions. Both were equally gay, blithe, and cheerful, ready at all times for innocent fun and amusement. But love had wrought a manifest change in the

temperament of Lucretia Rockwood. Her disposition to joke had grown somewhat less, and her thoughts more confined to a single object. This is perhaps the natural consequence of love upon the female heart. At any rate, it had such an effect upon the heart of Lucretia.

"Do you intend to go out fishing to-day?" asked Margaret.

"Yes, and I must be off immediately," replied her father. "I intended to have gone out early. I think I shall come across some shoals of mackerel to-day. They begin to come this way."

"O, let us go with you," exclaimed Margaret. "It is a beautiful day, and we shall have a glorious time."

"Not to-day," said the father. "I shall go farther out to-day than I'm willing to have you go. To-morrow, if the weather should prove favourable, you may accompany me."

The old man now prepared his mackerel gearing, and soon his boat was scudding away towards the south-east under a gentle breeze from the west. The twin sisters stood upon a high bluff watching their father as he was wafted over the gentle swells of the ocean. He was now nearly three miles from the shore.

While these beautiful girls were thus standing upon the rock and gazing upon their father's receding boat, two men were prowling about a wharf in Boston, at which lay the vessel in which Horace Malcolm was to sail. The names of these men were Dick Throttle and Tom Carver. There was nothing in their dress to distinguish them from common sailors;

but a shrewd observer of the human countenance would at once have seen that villainy was written in broad characters upon their faces. There was something upon their brows besides a rough, weather-beaten skin. The peculiar expression of their eyes told too plainly to be mistaken that they were graceless scoundrels, and ripe for any dark deed of blood. They were strong and muscular, and somewhat above the common size.

These men belonged to a piratical vessel which lay off in the stream. They had prepared the vessel so that no signs of the murderous business in which they were engaged should ostensibly appear.

They had put in for some supplies, and were to sail that day ; but, before they did so, these two men were sent on shore to reconnoitre and ascertain if any vessel having money or other things valuable on board was about to weigh anchor and leave the town.

Throttle and Carver were selected for this purpose, because they were shrewd, cunning fellows, as much so as any of the crew, with the exception of the captain, and perhaps the mate, for both these pirates were dark spirits.

"That ship will sail soon, according to the appearances about her," said Dick Throttle, pointing to the vessel in which Malcolm was to sail shortly.

"I wonder if she has a valuable cargo on board—any of the genuine silver and gold. That's the stuff, Tom—light to carry, and much value in a small lump."

"I think she is about ready to weigh

anchor and cast off," replied Tom Carver. "I have no doubt she has money on board."

"There's every appearance of it," replied his companion. "There's a young sailor walking upon the deck. Let us go on board and pump him slyly."

They now approached the vessel, and stepped on board in a careless, indifferent manner.

"Good morning, shipmate," said Throttle, addressing Horace Malcolm, who was walking upon the deck, and thinking of his intended voyage and Lucretia Rockwood, from whom he now expected to be absent several months. "This is a fine ship. Is she expected to sail on?"

"She will sail to-morrow, wind and weather permitting," replied Horace Malcolm.

"Where is she bound?" asked Throttle.

"For Buenos Ayres," replied Malcolm.

"I and my friend here would like a place on board," said Throttle. "Has she her full complement of hands? We know something 'bout the country she is bound for, and should like to go there."

"All her hands are engaged for the voyage," said Malcolm. "The last one was shipped not more than an hour ago."

"We're too late, then," said Throttle. "I'm sorry, for she is a noble ship, and we would have liked to have made part of her crew."

"So am I sorry," said Carver. "She's just the craft I should love to sail in."

"What does she carry for cargo?" inquired Throttle.

"She goes in ballast," replied Malcolm.

"A few boxes of specie, I suppose, to keep the ballast more steady," said Throttle.

"She has a few thousand hard dollars aboard," replied Malcolm.

"A good haul for pirates," said Throttle. "Don't you fear them? I understand there was a suspicious vessel seen off the coast here within a few days."

"One did chase a brig, but she hadn't canvas enough for her," replied Malcolm.

"She didn't get very near to the brig, so that the captain couldn't ascertain what kind of looking craft she was."

"I should be afraid she is now cruising about in this quarter, especially if your ship has much money on board," said Throttle.

"How much has she for Buenos Ayres?"

"Not far from fifty thousand dollars," replied Malcolm.

At this moment two large guns were driven down to the wharf by a truck an, and thrown off.

"That looks rather warlike," said Throttle, as several hands were engaged in taking the cannon from the trucks and preparing to put them on board the ship.

"Yes," said Malcolm, "we intend to protect our ship and cargo, and if the pirates attack us we mean to give them a warm reception. They must come over our dead bodies before they can reach the boxes of specie."

"I see you mean to guard well the silver," said Throttle. "That's right. Fifty thousand dollars are not found in every ship's bottom.

I suppose you will also have some small arms in addition to the cannon."

"A good gun and cutlass for every man on board," replied young Malcolm.

"How many hands form the crew?" asked Throttle, still anxious to find out the full strength of the ship.

"Twenty smart fellows, besides the officers," he replied. "With such a crew, and guns and ammunition enough, we think we shall be able to fight our way over the ocean in spite of the black rascals."

"You'll give them a hard one at anyrate," said Throttle, eyeing the guns upon the wharf sharply, to ascertain their calibre and weight.

"That's our full determination," said the young sailor. "It would not surprise me at all if we should have a fight before we are five days out. The piratical craft which chased the brig a short time ago may be hanging about the coast. If she is, and makes an attack upon us, we intend not to ask or give any quarter. There will be bloody work."

"I glory in your spunk, shipmate, and I should be glad to be with you," said Throttle. "Well, we cannot berth here, and we may as well be off."

Having obtained all the information they sought, the two pirates left the vessel and went about other wharves to see what discoveries they could make.

"I say, Tom," said Throttle, "that's a smart young sailor on board that ship. If all the hands are as full of fight as he is, they would flog us for aught I know."

"We have twice as many men as they have, and one of our guns is much larger than either of those we saw on the wharf," said Carver.

"But there were two more cannons on deck," replied Throttle. "These, it is true, were not so large as those upon the wharf, but then they are about the size of ours, except one long one."

"Well, we could keep them at a long shot, and pour into them with our biggest," said his companion.

"But there's another thing to be taken into the account before we venture an attack," said Throttle. "That ship looks to me as if she would sail as fast as our vessel. In that case we couldn't very well keep out of the reach of their guns; and to be honest with you, Tom, I shouldn't like to fall into their hands, if they are all as spirited and courageous as that young sailor talks. They would be quite as dangerous foes as we are. If they should happen to conquer us, there wouldn't be many of us left alive to tell the story, I'm thinking. However, we'll tell our captain what discoveries we have made, and then he can take that course which he may judge best. Those boxes of specie would be a rich prize."

"Yes," said Carver, "they are worth running some risk for, at any rate; but I am no more fond of having my throat cut, or of being strangled by the neck, than you are. A portion of that silver, however, I wouldn't refuse, if it should happen to fall in our way. It would make a rather handsome dividend among our crew."

They saw no other ships about to sail which were so rich as the first one they examined.

They went to their boat, and rowed to their vessel.

"Well Dick, what discoveries have you made?" asked the captain. "Any rich prizes about to put to sea?"

"We've found one ship which sails to-morrow, with fifty thousand dollars in specie."

"Fifty thousand dollars in specie!" repeated the captain, opening wide his eyes, and gazing upon them with manifest signs of joy depicted on his piratical countenance. "Fifty thousand dollars did you say?"

"Yes, and guns to defend it," said Throttle.

"Ah! that alters the case very materially," replied the captain.

"That's just what I've been thinking," said Dick. "But you shall hear. She will carry four cannon, and small arms enough for the whole crew, which consists of twenty men besides the officers."

"Twenty!" echoed the captain. "Well, we've twice that number. How large are their guns?"

"They are about the size of ours, except our long one," replied Dick.

"We mustn't let that money pass without a trial to obtain it," replied the captain. "If we do, we shall disgrace our profession. What say you, Tom?"

"I say, let us try them at a long shot, and see how they will bear that," replied Tom.

"Bravo! Tom, bravo!" exclaimed the captain. "You've hit upon the thing exactly;

for the same thought just entered my mind.
What do you think of that, Throttle?"

"I'll go with you, captain, and fight so long as I can find a plank on the deck to stand upon."

"Good!" said the captain. "I knew you would be the last man to hang back when fifty thousand shiners beckon you on. They don't grow on every bush, nor are found in every ship's hold. What say you, brave companions?"

"We go for the money, captain," shouted many voices in the same breath.

"Well said, brave comrades!" replied the captain, in a rough, coarse voice.

"We'll try them with our long gun first, and see how they'll relish that."

Forty desperadoes stood upon the deck gazing upon their captain and listening to his words of encouragement. A more blood-thirsty crew never sailed upon the ocean. They were from different countries and spoke different languages, but their hearts were all alike, and all were steeped in crime to their lips before they entered on board this vessel. The captain was a dare-devil sort of a fellow, a Spaniard by birth, and well acquainted with the ocean. He was about fifty years of age, large size, frame firmly knit together, dark complexion and an expression of countenance which clearly manifested the deep depravity of his soul. He was well qualified, by his superior tact and wickedness, to command such an infernal crew as were banded together on board this craft. Never did the ocean waves bear up a more graceless crew.

The mate was an American, and before he became a pirate he had been imprisoned for robbery, and committed one murder upon land for which he was never punished by the laws, although a heavy reward had been offered for his apprehension at the time he perpetrated the deed and made his escape. Not a single individual of the crew could be found who had not committed some crime upon the land before he conspired upon the lives of his fellow men upon the water. This same captain and crew had captured one merchant ship and murdered every soul on board, except three women who were compelled to live on board their vessel with them. Not long after these women were taken, one of them became sick, and before she was entirely dead the captain ordered her to be thrown overboard as a useless thing. In the last stages of a severe illness she was thrown into the sea, in spite of the tears and entreaties of her female companions. The survivors were still on board their vessel, and made to assist in the cooking. Two more wretched and miserable beings were not to be found upon the sea or the land. They were mother and daughter. They had witnessed the horrid death of a husband and a father. This tragedy took place six months previous to the time our story finds them. And during that time they had been subjected, through fear of death, to the control of the master and mate Vick Throttle and Tom Carver, the next in power to the captain and mate, were not exactly satisfied because the officers fared so much better than they did. They frequently complained to the captain and

mate until the latter had promised them the first ladies whom they might capture.

Soon after Throttle and Carver came on board with the intelligence of the ship and cargo of specie, they weighed anchor and put to sea, determined to watch the ship when she made her appearance outside the islands. It was now about ten o'clock in the morning, and the ship was not to set sail until the next day. While they were outward bound, these four leaders went into the cabin to hold a council, and after they had made the necessary arrangements, and laid their plans for the attack of the specie-laden ship, Throttle introduced the subject of women.

"Do you think there will be any ladies on board the ship?" inquired Throttle of the captain. "I should feel quite proud to have a Boston lady to accompany me round the world."

"Oh! Dick, you dog. No doubt of that," said the captain. "It is possible some fair damsels of the town may take passage in the ship, and perhaps the captain's wife and daughter are with him."

"I hope such will turn out to be the fact," said the mate. "I suppose you both would like the daughter, especially if she should happen to be more beautiful than her mother."

Thus they continued to amuse themselves in conversation until they were several miles out. They then concluded to steer an easterly course for a few miles, to pass away the time until the next morning should come.

CHAPTER III.

WE left the twin sisters standing upon a high bluff, gazing upon their father's boat as the gentle breeze wafted her over the ocean. They gazed upon it until it appeared but a speck to their view.

"Father intends to find the mackerel if there's any in this region, I reckon, he goes so far," said Margaret.

Lucretia made no reply, but appeared to be thinking of her young sailor. As her father's boat receded from her view, it brought vividly to her mind the vessel in which Horace Malcolm was about to sail.

"How thoughtful and serious you are this morning!" continued Margaret. "I suppose you are thinking as you look at father's boat how soon Horace's vessel will be going out of sight in the same way. Be of good cheer, sister. Three months will soon pass away, and he will return."

"He may return, and he may not," replied Lucretia, thoughtfully. "There are many perils on the ocean."

"True, sister, but I suppose you think the pirates are the greatest perils, and more to be dreaded than winds and storms," said Margaret. "Well, I don't so much wonder at you, for I should rather drown in the cold ocean than have my throat cut from ear to ear by the pirates."

"See!" exclaimed Lucretia. "A vessel has just hove in sight, and appears standing towards the east. Perhaps that may be a pirate's ship.

They are steering towards where we last saw father's boat."

"I see it, it appears to be coming this way," said Margaret. "We will watch it, and see where it goes to. I don't see what it can be coming this way for."

The vessel continued her course towards the shore, and the young females kept their eyes upon her every moment. On she came and was fast nearing the anxious and fair observers. Margaret felt nervous, but why she could not tell. Even her sister, as the vessel approached the shore, began to catch the alarm which Margaret expressed. There was something mysterious in the movements of this strange vessel, and they knew that it was not usual for vessels to stand in towards the shore as this one did.

"I feel nervous this morning," said Margaret; "but I don't like the looks of that vessel. I wish father would appear in sight."

"There! I see father's boat!" exclaimed Lucretia. "Look a little to the left of that vessel and you will see it. I believe he's coming this way."

"Oh, I see him! It is his boat!" said Margaret, clasping her hands. "He is certainly returning. Perhaps he sees the vessel coming towards us, and changed his course on that account."

"It is possible," replied her sister. "How fast that vessel approaches us! All her sails are set, and she skims over the water with great speed."

* * * * *

We will leave the twin sisters for a short time, and learn what is going on aboard of this strange vessel.

"Captain, let me take your glass and view these mermaids on yonder bluff," said Dick Throttle, taking the glass and gazing intently upon these young ladies. "Ah! they are live women, and beautiful ones too," continued Throttle. "Let the vessel keep on her course a mile or two further, and then heave to. Tom and I will then take a boat and approach the dear creatures."

"They are some fisherman's daughters, and that boat yonder may be their father's," said the captain, raising his glass to his eye, and looking at old Rockwood and his boat. "He appears to be standing in, but he's several miles out."

"Let me have the glass again," said Throttle.

The captain handed it to him, and again he examined the twin sisters, who still kept their position upon the bluff, anxiously gazing first on their father's boat, and then on the pirate vessel.

"They are lovely creatures, and nobody seems to be with them," said Throttle. "In a few momen's I will see how they look face to face."

"There, heave to," shouted the captain.

The vessel was brought round into the wind, and a boat was lowered. Throttle, Carver, and two others, now jumped into it and began to row for the shore.

* * * * *

"See!" exclaimed Margaret. "They have

lowered a boat, and four men are getting into it."

"They are coming towards us, and father is ten miles or more distant," said Lucretia. "They will not be so wicked as to attempt to injure us. Do you think they will?"

"I do not know," replied her sister. "I tremble. I don't like their appearance."

"They may be coming after water, or something else," said Lucretia.

"Don't you think we had better run to the house?" asked Margaret in a voice tremulous with fear. "I'm really afraid of them, they look so"—

"We will go," replied Lucretia, turning and running to the house, followed by her sister.

* * * * *

"Oh! they run!" said Throttle, as he sat in the stern of the boat as steersman. "Pull away, my hearties. The beautiful birds have flown to their cage, but we can catch them there quite as easy as upon the rocks."

"They may run into the woods and conceal themselves," said Carver, pulling away his oar with renewed energy, and straining his eyes toward the shore.

"Never mind, Tom," said Throttle. "We shall soon know where they are. They can't escape us this time."

The boat now struck the shore, and the ruffians leaped upon the rocks. Throttle took the lead, and repaired directly to the house. Going up to the door, he knocked, but no female voice bade him come in. The girls

were greatly alarmed, and concealed themselves in their sleeping room. Again the pirate knocked much louder than before, but his summons was not answered. The young ladies heard the loud knocking at the door, and trembled for their safety.

“Open the door, young ladies, and you shall not be hurt,” said Throttle, raising the latch, and pushing open the door, for in their fright they had forgotten to fasten it.

“Ah! the door is not fastened, and we may walk in,” continued Throttle, entering the house, followed by his companions. “They are not here after all, but perhaps they may be in this room. There is a door, and we’ll just examine the premises.”

Throttle placed his shoulder against the door, and it swung open.

“Come, fair maids, and behold those who love you,” said Throttle, placing his hand upon the shoulder of Margaret.

Frightened almost to death, as the poor girl was, she felt the flesh of her shoulder crawl as the hand of the pirate fell upon it.

“Come, sweet ones, and go with us, and we will give you a good sail on the ocean,” he continued, bending down his ugly face, and imprinting a kiss on the fair cheek of Luoretia.

She felt his polluting lips and coarse bristles upon her cheek. “Monster!” said she, “away, touch me not, nor my sister, at your peril!”

“Now, fair damsels, don’t be angry, and bear out the eyes that adore you,” said Throttle, while a smile passed over his countenance. “You must go with us. Come, gather

up your clothes, and make haste, for we have but little time to spare in words. Those lips were made for kissing, not for calling hard names. You are old enough now to have kind husbands, and such we'll be to you."

"Leave us!" exclaimed Lucretia, in a voice which would melt a heart of stone. "Leave us, and go your way."

"Mercy! Oh! God! Have mercy upon us!" cried Margaret, in the agony of her soul. "Don't carry us away from our father! Do leave us!"

"One scolds and the other prays," said Tom Carver. "They are a pair of beautiful birds, and we'll find them cages. Come, be in haste; for we can't wait. If you keep us here until your father comes, we shall be obliged to cut his throat to make him quiet."

"Come, come, young ladies, we cannot spend any more time in talking," said Throttle, in a voice which now told more of authority than of love. "You must prepare yourselves to go without further delay. Go peaceably if you will, but if you choose we will carry you to our boat."

"Have you no pity in your souls?" said Lucretia. "Will you take us away from our father, and let us never again see our mother's grave, out in yonder grove, where we have shed so many tears, and heaved so many sighs? You will not—you cannot be so wicked and cruel!"

"When you're on board our vessel, younker, you shall have time to shed your tears and heave your sighs; but you must go now, and

delay us no longer," replied the heartless and graceless Throttle. "Come, stir yourselves, my fair damsels. Go with us you shall : peaceably if you will, but forcibly, if you compel us to carry you by main strength."

The poor trembling girls clasped each other in their arms. The pirates, thinking it of no use to wait any longer, began to prepare to carry them to their boat. The girls struggled at first, but finding themselves overpowered, they tremblingly yielded, and were borne away from their home in the arms of pirates.

They were placed on board the boat, and soon they were on their way to the vessel. They had made but a few strokes with the oars before Lucretia saw in the distance her father's boat coming directly toward them. The pirate vessel was south from them, and Rockwood's boat was further east, at about the same distance as they were from the vessel. Throttle also saw Rockwood's boat, and wishing to avoid any collision with him, steered his boat out of a direct line to the vessel, a little to the south-west. By taking this course he had further to row, but would keep out of the way of the old fisherman.

Rockwood saw the pirate vessel laying to, and the boat which was bearing off his beloved daughters ; but he knew it not. True, he did not like the looks of the vessel, and his curiosity was excited to find out for what purpose this boat had been to the shore near his dwelling. As yet he was not near enough to discover whether there were females in the pirate boat or not, but when she was steered out

of the direct line to the vessel, his fears and suspicions that all was not right were much increased.

In order to ascertain what was going on, he also veered his boat, intending to run as near them as possible. He had not proceeded far in this direction before he saw there was one female on board at least ; but still he did not suppose the female he saw was his daughter. Margaret's head was in her sister's lap, and consequently she could not be seen at much distance. The old man crowded all sail, determined, if possible, to ascertain who was on board the strange boat. Throttle saw by the old fisherman's movement what his object was, and ordered the men to pull away at the oars with all their might. They did so, but, notwithstanding, Rockwood's boat was nearing them very fast. Lucretia watched with intense anxiety the movements of both boats.

"Ah! the old fellow means to know what prizes we're bearing off," said Throttle.

"O, let us go on board father's boat," exclaimed Lucretia. "We'll give you money or any thing we have. Father will thank you and pray for you !"

The voice of Lucretia aroused Margaret, and she raised her head from her sister's lap. As she did so her eyes fell on her father's boat, which now was not a mile distant.

"Your father's prayers, fair maid, will not do us any good," said Throttle. "He had better keep them for himself ; and, as to putting you on board his boat, we cannot think of

it, for we have much larger and better accommodation on board our vessel yonder."

"O, father, save us!" exclaimed Margaret, extending her arms towards her father's boat, more than a hundred rods distant.

"Have the goodness to make a little less noise, if you please," said Carver, gently patting her on the shoulder. "We'll take as good care of you as your old father. You and your sister shall live like ladies on board our vessel; and you shall see all the great cities of the world."

"O, father, hurry your boat towards us, or we shall be lost for ever," cried Margaret, not heeding the caution of the pirate.

The old fisherman was now in hailing distance, and he saw the females on board the boat were his daughters. The thought struck him that they were in the hands of pirates. What his feelings were at that moment no language can express.

In his agony he cried out, "Give me back my daughters. Take all I've been years in accumulating, but give me back my daughters!"

"Pull away, my brave comrades, and soon we shall reach our vessel," said Throttle. "Heed not the cries nor the threats of an old fisherman. He will soon get over the feelings that now agitate him."

"Stay!" exclaimed the old man, as he saw his daughters extending their hands towards him. "For Heaven's sake stop your boat, and let me have my daughters!"

The pirate boat shot past him. He turned his boat to follow, but the wind was in the

wrong direction. Instantly he lowered his sails, and taking his oars, pulled after them with a strength and energy he had never felt before ; but, in spite of his almost superhuman power, the pirate boat gained upon him at every stroke of the oar. Still he kept on rowing toward the vessel, and, just when they were ready to set sail, he came up alongside.

“Give me back my daughters, or take me with them,” he exclaimed, extending his hand toward the vessel.

By this time the girls were hurried into the cabin about as much dead as alive.

The captain, Throttle, and several others, were standing upon the deck, gazing on the old fisherman, and laughing him to scorn.

“If you will not give me back my daughters, take me on board, and if you are so cruel and hard-hearted as not to do either, shoot me here in my boat and put an end to my sorrows,” exclaimed the unfortunate father, the tears streaming down his aged cheeks.

“Take him at his word, Throttle, and stop his whining, for dead men tell no tales,” said the commander.

Soon as the words fell from the captain’s lips, Throttle seized a gun, and pointed it at the old man, but he flinched not, nor moved a muscle of his face. The pirate fired, and lodged a charge of buckshot in his breast. The old fisherman fell over the side of the boat, and the deep sea covered him from their sight. They now set sail towards the south,

to be in readiness for to-morrow's enterprise.

CHAPTER IV.

"WELL, we shall have a glorious day and a fair wind to set sail," said Horace Malcolm to William Turell, as they were pacing the deck of the ship together, and waiting for the captain to come on board and give orders to cast off from the wharf.

"Yes, I think we shall have the wind from the north-west before noon from the appearance of the clouds," replied Turell.

"We're well prepared, too, for the pirates, if the scoundrels should attempt to make an attack upon us," said Malcolm. "I heard the captain say yesterday he thought it very probable that we might have a brush with them before we had been long out."

"I think so too, for that craft which chased the brig the other day is probably cruising about and watching for the outward-bound vessels," replied Turell. "It is generally supposed that the ships which sail from this port have a good deal of specie on board. If the pirates should attack and conquer us, they would make a good haul. But we would fight hard before we would yield."

"No doubt we would," said Malcolm, determinedly.

"By the way, Horace, how did you leave the beautiful twins?" asked Turell, smiling.

"I left one in tears, and the other in smiles," replied Malcolm. "It is hard parting

with Lucretia. Every time I kiss her for the last time before sailing on a voyage, I almost resolve never to lead a sailor's life again after I return. She's a lovely creature."

"And so is her twin sister, you say," answered Turell.

"Yes, she is a splendid girl, and one of the most lively, animated creatures you ever set eyes upon, I can assure you," said Malcolm. "You would only have to see her once and hear her laugh, to fall in love with her on the spot."

"Did the other one strike you all in a heap so?" asked Turell.

"It wasn't far from that," replied Horace. "The first time I saw her I thought I loved her, and the second time I set eyes upon her I knew I did."

"Well, Horace, I must confess it was a very sudden operation," replied Turell. "Perhaps my heart is not so susceptible to those tender impressions as yours is."

"If your heart is cased in steel, Margaret's bright eyes would penetrate it, and find the quick, or if it is surrounded with ice, her merry laugh and warm breath would melt it away," said Horace. "No, no, Bill, you couldn't stand long an indifferent spectator of her charms, unless you are more heartless than I think you are."

"Well, Horace, you spin a good yarn," answered Turell. "I believe I'm almost in love with the fair creature now, only from hearing her praises on your tongue. Soon as we return I will accompany you, and see the twin sisters."

The captain now came on board, and said to Malcolm and Turell, "Well, boys, is everything in its place?"

"I believe so, sir," respectfully answered Malcolm.

"All the guns and ammunition are on board, are they?" inquired the captain, addressing Turell. "We mustn't set sail without these, for the pirates are hovering about the coast, I fear, and we must pitch into them, if the scoundrels should give us chase."

"They are, sir," said Turell. "And our hands are ready to wield them in case it should become necessary."

"Well," said the captain, "we have a valuable cargo on board, and we must defend it at all hazards. The pirates must not have the handling and dividing of the specie that is entrusted to our care. By the by, Horace, hadn't you some conversation with a couple of rough-looking sailors on board this ship a day or two since?"

"Two came on board yesterday morning, I think, and conversed awhile," replied Horace. "They were well dressed, but their faces looked to me rather ugly."

"Did they not appear rather inquisitive?" asked the captain.

"After they went away I thought so on reflection," replied the young sailor. "But I didn't think much about it at the time."

"It is not impossible but those sailors were spies sent out from a piratical vessel in the offing," said the captain. "The same rascals went on board other ships in the harbour, and

made the same inquiries as they did in this. At any rate, Captain Blanchard told me there were two sailors came on board his ship, and were very inquisitive. These robbers on the ocean are getting very bold now-a-days. We must keep a sharp look-out, and be prepared for them, in case they make any attempt to attack our ship."

"Aye, sir, we are prepared for the worst," replied Malcolm.

"What time do you propose to sail, sir?" inquired Turell.

"In the course of an hour," replied the captain. "Let everything be in perfect order."

The captain now left the ship, and went up town to transact some business previous to his sailing, and to bid farewell to his family. We will now return to the pirate vessel.

When Margaret and Lucretia Rockwood were taken from the boat on board "The Terror of the Ocean" (for that was the name the pirates had given their vessel) they were hurried into the cabin, where they met the unfortunate mother and daughter who had been captured some months. The young girls heard the report of the gun whose discharge sent their father into an ocean grave, but they knew not that he was murdered, still they had their fears and suspicions.

The name of the lady who had been previously captured was Appleton, and her daughter's was Amelia. These female captives were rejoiced to see once more some persons of their own sex, and yet Mrs Appleton's heart was pained when she saw two such beautiful and

lovely females as Lucretia and Margaret brought to such a fate as awaited those on board that pirate vessel. When they were hurried into the cabin she could not control her feelings, for the tears streamed down her pale and emaciated cheeks.

After the twin sisters were hurried into the cabin by Throttle and Carver, the scoundrels left them, and went upon deck. They were now alone with Mrs Appleton and her daughter.

"O, dear girls, how my heart aches for you!" said Mrs Appleton. "I know by your looks that you have been cruelly torn from your home and your parents."

"Our mother is dead, and our father was in his boat near this vessel when we were taken on board, and forced into your presence," said Lucretia, in a voice that showed how deeply sorrow and grief had penetrated her heart.

"Fortunate indeed was it for your mother that she did not live to witness this your hard fate," said the kind-hearted Mrs Appleton. "If it were not wrong to quarrel with the decrees of heaven, I could have wished that I might have died, and my daughter too, ere we had lived to witness each other's misery and degradation."

"You'll be a mother to us now we're so cruelly torn from our father," said Lucretia. "We'll do as you may direct us on board this dreadful ship."

"Ah, dear girl, you will be forced to do as the pirates order, and not left at liberty to do as might counsel you," replied the good woman.

"I have no power over my own daughter, and how can I hope to have any control over you? True, our minds and thoughts are left free, for the spirits that God has given us cannot be enslaved. The pirates can control our bodies, and even take our lives, but they cannot prevent our souls from offering prayers to God for our deliverance, nor quench the holy fires which are kindled on the unseen altar of our hearts."

"The pirates will not abuse us, now that they have taken us, will they?" asked Lucretia.

"O, you must prepare your minds for all kinds of abuse, and even for death itself," replied Mrs Appleton. "You will have enough to eat and drink, but nothing else from those cruel, blood-thirsty monsters which can make you comfortable. As I before said, your minds cannot be controlled, but your mortal frames will be prostituted to the vilest purposes. There is no hope in your case. I feel it my duty to speak plainly to you, and let you know the worst. Oh, God! how much I wish it were otherwise."

"Will the cruel, black-hearted pirates attempt to violate our chastity, and soil our virtue?" inquired Lucretia, in a voice of deep sorrow and great anxiety, while her pure thoughts were upon her beloved Horace Malcolm, and her heart still beat with love's holiest emotions for the young sailor.

"For this purpose, and this alone, did they steal and forcibly drag you from your father's house," said Mrs Appleton.

Lucretia cast her eyes upon the cabin floor, and for a few minutes remained silent. She appeared to be wrapped in deep reflection, and her bosom heaved with violent emotions, as if a severe struggle was agitating the very depths of her soul. Her sister Margaret gazed upon her with intense anxiety, and so did Mrs Appleton and her daughter.

After the lapse of a few moments the agitated girl raised her eyes from the floor, and extending her right hand towards the ceiling, and assuming a serious attitude, said, in a firm, unshaken voice :

“I swear before Him who created my soul, and gave me this body for its dwelling place on earth, that I will never yield to the base desires of any man on board this vessel.”

“And may God keep you steadfast in your solemn oath,” said Mrs Appleton, surprised at the resolution and power manifested by this young girl.

“God will keep me steadfast in all holy resolves,” said Lucretia. “And is not this a holy resolution?”

“It is indeed, my good girl, and would to heaven I and my daughter had been able to keep a like resolve; but the fear of death, the king of terrors, drove us from our holy purpose, and after many severe and heart-rending struggles, we yielded. But how often have I since wished that I had suffered death in its most appalling form, ere I had given myself up to the base desires of those wicked men. Death indeed had been a blessing, but its terrors were more than my weak nerves could then

bear. I saw my husband's corpse lie bleeding upon the deck of the ship in which we sailed. He fell with a weapon in his hand, nobly struggling for his own life and for mine and his daughter's; but one of these men who brought you into this place struck him on the head with a bludgeon, while the other cut his throat with a large knife. I was compelled to witness this appalling scene, and so was my daughter; for we were both clinging to the skirts of his coat for protection when the horrid deed was perpetrated. Never, O never can I forget that dreadful scene!"

While Mrs Appleton was speaking, her daughter, Amelia, threw her head into her mother's lap and cried and sobbed as if her heart would break.

Margaret also wept, and the tears flowed freely down her cheeks, while her sister stood erect as if she were that moment ready to meet death in all its terrors rather than yield herself to the pirates. Margaret had less nerve than her sister, but she caught some of the spirit of Lucretia's resolution, and secretly resolved to suffer even death, if her sister held out in the purposes she had so fully and resolutely expressed.

"A dreadful scene have you witnessed, enough to break the heart of a wife and a mother," said Lucretia. "Such an exhibition must have been worse than death itself, but you are still alive, and I thank God that you were not murdered when your husband was; for your presence cheers us in this horrid slavery. Although you have no power to

control the passions of these wicked men, yet the thought that one virtuous heart beats on board this pirate ship gives me pleasure and even hope. Your daughter too has a good heart. And although her body may have been defiled by these men, yet her soul is unstained and spotless. I feel as if Heaven had inspired me with courage to meet my fate, whatever it may be. I am surprised at the emotions which swell my bosom at this awful time. It seems as if special power were given me on this occasion. Oh, God ! I pray that I may hold out and not shrink from my purposes of heart."

Margaret gazed upon her sister, and listened intently to her remarks. Her feelings were aroused, and she felt as if she would follow the example of her more courageous sister, but she remained silent.

While these females were thus conversing and sympathizing with each other in the cabin below, the captain, mate, and the two men who led off in the abduction of the twin sisters, were laughing and joking on the deck above.

"That's a good shot, Dick," said the captain, as the heartless pirate fired at the old fisherman, and perforated his heart with the shafts of death. "There ! the old fellow leaves his boat and tumbles into the sea to feed the sharks. He's done thinking about his lovely daughters. You and Tom Carver are lucky dogs to find two such bewitching creatures on these shores. They look very much alike too."

"They are twin sisters," said Dick Throttle.

"No wonder they resemble each other so much. They are beautiful and bewitching as you say, captain. We might have ranged the whole coast and not found two such beautiful girls. They must have had a handsome mother, for their old father didn't look much better than we do when we are shaved and all slicked up."

"Fortunately for you they are twins," said the captain, addressing Dick Throttle. "You and Tom will have no quarrel about their eyes, and can settle the question about the choice of them very easily, as they look very much alike."

"True, captain, we shall have no difficulty on that score," said Carver. "But one of them is a little higher-toned than the other, and not so easily conquered."

"Never mind, Tom, about that," replied Throttle. "I will take the wildest one, as my personal charms may be greater and more captivating than yours."

"Ah well, you may take the wild and obstinate one, as you call her, and I will take the other," replied Carver, quite willing to adopt this course.

"Then that matter is amicably settled, is it not, Dick?" asked the captain.

"To a shaving, captain," replied Throttle. "I think mine's the handsomer of the two, besides being more coltish. Well, I am an experienced man, and just the character to manage such articles."

"What say you, Carver, to an exchange with me?" inquired the mate. "I will let

you have the beautiful mother of the captain's girl, and take yours at a venture. You know Mrs Appleton is a splendid woman."

"Very likely, and as you are fond of splendid women, you may keep her," replied Carver, smiling, and looking very cunningly at the captain.

The company had a good hearty laugh, and separated to look after the affairs of the vessel. It was now nearly nightfall, and every man was preparing for the night. Orders were given to keep a strict watch, lest the ship laden with specie might sail and get out of their sight before they were aware of it. All was anxiety and excitement, and none of the crew felt more solicitude or anticipated more pleasure than Dick Throttle and Tom Carver.

CHAPTER V.

"CAST OFF," said the captain of the ship as he stood upon the quarter deck, addressing Horace Malcolm and some other sailors. "All things are now ready, and the wind is favourable."

The sailors promptly obeyed the order of the captain, and busied themselves in clearing the noble ship from her fastenings at the wharf. Quite a group of men, women, and children had assembled to see the gallant vessel swing off.

"Good luck to you, captain—a pleasant voyage, and a safe return," were the exclamations of many friends and acquaintances, as they stood upon the wharf, to all of which the

gallant captain bowed, and the jolly crew swung their tarpaulins in token of their admiration of the respect that was shown them by eager crowds. Slowly and ~~majestically~~ the ship turned round as the wind filled her sails. Soon she was some distance from the wharf, and moving gracefully before the gentle breeze out to sea. The town seemed to recede from their view, and in a short time ~~was~~ lost to their sight. The weather was fine, the wind fair, and everything in and about the ship betokened a happy and prosperous voyage.

We leave the noble ship and gallant crew under full sail for the southern hemisphere, while we go on board the pirate vessel and see how affairs are going on in that floating pandemonium.

The sun has just risen, and all the pirate crew were at their posts. Some hours before the "Phcenix" (for that was the name of the ship) had cast off from the wharf, the "Terror of the Ocean," the name of the pirate vessel, had steered towards the south, but was several miles farther out at sea than the track which the "Phcenix" took in her outward course. The pirates took up this position so that they might see any vessel that passed between them and the shore, and at the same time be far enough from land to discover any which might be cruising outside.

"A fine breeze this morning," said the captain, addressing Dick Throttle and several others of the piratical crew. "Our craft is in fine trim, and skims over the water

as lightly as a gull. That ship has not made her appearance yet, has she, think you? I would not miss her, for I feel in my bones as if we could take her, and just transfer those boxes of silver to our own quarters.

"I think she has not come out yet," said Throttle. "If she had our watch would have seen her, for they have kept a sharp look-out. Nothing like a good rich cargo to sharpen the sight of our brave lads. Silver dollars with a small sprinkling of the yellow boys have a wonderful effect in keeping men at their posts!"

"What did you say the name of the ship is?" inquired the mate.

"The word "Phœnix" was painted on her stern in large letters," replied Throttle.

"Phœnix!" repeated the mate. "Well—the name is well enough, but I'm thinking when we scuttle her and send her down below, she will hardly rise from her watery grave."

"Just so," said Carver. "If we do remove the heavy boxes of specie and thereby lighten her, the salt water will keep her down."

"Well spoken!" exclaimed the captain. "I reckon we could sink her if that precious ballast was first removed; at any rate we could try. The surest way I have always found to keep the world in ignorance of our proceedings is to bury ship and crew under the waves, for then neither is left to speak of the tale. I recollect of reading in one of the London newspapers that a certain vessel and all her crew were sent to the bottom by the bravery and valour of the 'Terror of the Ocean.' I laughed

in my sleeve as I read the melancholy account."

"I saw the same article while we were on shore at Cadiz," said Throttle, laughing. "When I was reading there were several persons in the room at the hotel; making their remarks, and I joined in with them."

"How many tears did you shed on the occasion?" asked the stone-hearted captain.

"Not quite so many as I drank glasses of liquor?" replied Throttle, laughing at his own wit.

"Very likely," said the captain. "If I should see you shed a tear I should be almost tempted to think it was the beginning of a second flood, and that the world would shortly be deluged."

"Well—if that should happen, think you, captain, our business would be good?" inquired Throttle.

"If we could find a second Ark we might have some sport," said the captain. "We could, perhaps, find ladies enough on board for our whole crew."

"Speaking of ladies reminds me of the twin sisters," said the mate. "How fared you last night? Did the wild daughter of the fisherman readily yield? I suppose your magical power made her love you before morning, did it not?"

Throttle was silent and hung down his head as if he was not disposed to answer the mate's question.

"Ah! silent, eh?" continued the mate, feeling his curiosity excited, and wishing to

know how the villain succeeded with his beautiful prize. "I fear your power has lost some of its magic since you've left the land and taken to the sea. Perhaps the salt water has had some effect upon you. It may be, too, that the ladies don't feel on the sea just as they do on the land. Was she troubled with sea-sickness?"

"Sea-sickness?" repeated Throttle, walking the deck rapidly, and flashing his eyes. Then turning round and facing the mate he continued. "Sea-sickness? No! A porpoise would be sea-sick as soon as she would, for she has been out with her father a thousand times. That's not the trouble."

"Then you've had some trouble it seems with the fair creature," said the captain, laughing at the villain's agitation and impatience. "I thought when I first saw you this morning that your countenance indicated that you did not rest well last night."

"Rest well?" repeated Throttle. "Why—she fought me like a wild cat, and swore by every bone in her back that she would die before she would yield."

"Where have your charms fled? The sea must have some peculiar effect upon you, or you would surely succeed better."

"The sea have an effect upon me?" echoed Throttle, impatiently. "She's the most determined little witch I ever came across by sea or land, but she's sweet as a rose and fresh as a new caught mackerel."

"I'll exchange with you, Throttle, and let you have the widow; for she grows worse and

worse, and begins to talk about death and all that," said the mate. "She has asked me to kill her several times, and put her out of misery; but I tell her I love her too well for that."

"What in the devil has got into the women?" said Carver, who had been attentively listening to the remarks of the mate and Throttle.

"Ah! trouble in that quarter too?" exclaimed the captain. "I believe now you'll have to let me take the beautiful twins and train them for you. To be sure I'm several years older than you are, and have a pretty strong sprinkling of gray hairs upon my head and whiskers, but then I can find a way to their hearts."

"How could an old gray beard like you do anything with those young creatures?" asked Throttle. "If you should offer to put your face near them they would shrink back as if a wolf were about to kiss them. No, no, captain, I'll try my luck a while longer, and then if I can't succeed without actually committing murder, I will call on you for help."

"Well, Carver, what do you say?" asked the captain, smiling.

"Say, why I say if Dick has found a more resolute, determined, wilful little devil than I have, I shall begin to think the girls born and brought up upon this shore belong to a different race of women from any I have ever seen in any country," replied Carver.

"Then, she acted just like her sister," said Throttle. "I wonder if twin sisters are not

different from other females. And I can't see why coming into the world at the same time should make any more difference in their tempers and constitutions than if one didn't breathe until a year after the other one did."

"Your suggestion, Throttle, brings to mind what I have always heard about twin sisters," said the captain. "And I believe it is true."

"What is that?" inquired Throttle, quite seriously.

"That twin sisters never bear any children," replied the captain.

"Did you ever hear that was the case?" asked Throttle, beginning to think there might be something in his suggestion after all.

"I certainly have, unless I'm very much mistaken," replied the captain. "At any rate, I'm quite sure that one of the twin sisters only will have babies. Of this I certainly have heard, and I've no doubt it is true. Many reasons could be given for this opinion which would stand the test of philosophy."

"A sail! a sail!" shouted one of the pirates at this moment, who stood on the forecastle. "She appears to be steering this way."

"Where?" exclaimed the captain, running to the forecastle, followed by the mate and others.

"There," replied the discoverer, pointing toward the north-east, and gazing intently in that direction. "See! her sails are all spread to the breeze, and she comes bravely on."

All were now engaged in looking at the

strange vessel with great anxiety. The news soon brought the whole crew upon the deck, and a worse looking set of human beings never assembled on the deck of a vessel, or congregated upon the earth.

While this alarm was upon deck, the four females were huddled together in the cabin below, expecting soon to hear the groans and witness the slaughter of human beings. Especially had Mrs Appleton and her daughter these expectations, for they had been witnesses to such scenes before.

"Is it the ship 'Phœnix,' think you?" anxiously inquired the captain, taking his glass and looking at the vessel.

"She's too far off to determine that," replied Throttle. "I can't tell whether she's a ship, schooner, or other craft. How does she appear to you?"

"She's coming directly towards us, and I'm uncertain what she is," replied the captain, handing Throttle the glass, and requesting him to examine her.

The pirate raised the glass to his eye, and gazed sometime very intently. At last, lowering the glass, he said—

"She does not look large enough for the 'Phœnix,' and yet she may be the same ship. Let us prepare."

"Yes, we must always be prepared, but we'll let her pass us without molestation, whatever she may be," said the captain. "In this way we can reconnoitre her, and see how she looks as she passes. Then, if we think best, we can follow and give her a shot with

our long gun by way of waking her up to a sense of her danger. It is best to let her get farther out before we make the attack. If we do not, we might alarm some other vessels. Give her sea room enough, and none to witness the scene."

"That's my opinion," said the mate. "I am for postponing the attack until towards nightfall. We can then do the work, and before morning be fifty miles from the scene of our exploit."

"That vessel don't look to me like the ship, Throttle, that I saw at the wharf," said Carver; "it does not look large enough."

"A vessel close to lying at the wharf looks quite a different size from one a couple of miles away. At six miles distance the Rock of Gibraltar looks like a mole hill."

In the meantime the spy-glass passed from hand to hand among the pirate officers.

The strange vessel came bowling along totally unconscious of any danger. If the crew had discovered the pirate they did not betray such a knowledge by any visible sign. They did not start tack nor sheet; nor did she deviate a single point from the course she had been steering, when she was first discerned from the deck of the "Terror of the Ocean."

All this time there were terrible emotions rending the hearts of the four women on board the pirate ship.

"Oh! my God! now I wish Horace Malcolm knew our situation!" exclaimed Lucretia. "Soon would he fly to our assistance, if there are ships enough in Boston harbour to take

this pirate vessel, and sink her in the depths of the ocean."

"Who is Horace Malcolm?" inquired the widow.

"He's my lover, and we expected to be married soon as he returns from his voyage," replied Lucretia, while a tear stood in her eye and her lips trembled.

"Then he has gone to sea, has he?" inquired the widow, gazing upon the agitated girl, and sympathising most deeply with her.

"No, he has not gone; he sails to-day from Boston."

"Sails to-day!" repeated Mrs Appleton, thoughtfully. "God only knows but he may be in that ship, which the pirates have discovered, and are now watching."

This did not occur to Lucretia until Mrs Appleton suggested it. And much surprised she was that she did not think of it. But the poor girl was so much troubled that she could hardly think of anything but her own dreadful situation.

"Oh! Heavens! I hope it is the same ship in which he sails!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands and looking wildly through the cabin windows. Then turning round and gazing upon her friend, she continued. "No, no, I ought not to hope so, for he might be murdered by these wicked men. And yet, if I must die, I would die with him. When I last saw him we spoke about pirates, for I dreamt about them!"

"Did you dream of pirates?" inquired Miss Appleton.

"I did, and was afraid he would be taken by them," she replied. "I told him my fears, but he said the ship in which he was going to sail would be armed to fight these robbers upon the ocean. Oh! if it is that ship they may take this wicked crew, and have them hung."

These remarks of Lucretia encouraged Mrs Appleton and the other females to hope. It was the brightest moment she had experienced since she was captured. They now anxiously waited for the ship to come up. By the stir on deck they thought the strange vessel was drawing near.

The vessel had now approached within a mile. She was coming directly towards them under full sail, and all eyes were upon her. Lucretia wanted to go upon deck, but Mrs Appleton held her back.

"Is it the 'Phoenix?'" inquired the pirate captain, addressing Throttle, at the same time he ordered the men to stand by the guns and be in readiness for further orders.

At this moment the strange vessel veered farther to the south-west, and showed her side, Throttle, taking his glass to his eye watching her movements.

"No, it is not the 'Phoenix.' She is a large schooner," replied Throttle, taking the glass from his eye and looking quite disappointed.

"Keep your eye upon her," said the captain; "she may be a prize worth taking. We must not let her pass if she looks favourable, without giving her notice with our long gun to heave to. Let me have the glass."

The captain took the glass and closely surveyed her for several minutes. On came the schooner, for such she proved to be, and was directing her course so as to pass to the east of them.

"Ah! she's nothing but a coaster," said the captain. "Let her pass unmolested, for she has no boxes of specie on board, and our hand is pretty well in; therefore, there is no need of our killing them merely for the sake of practice."

"Yes, let her pass," said Throttle. "We won't waste our powder on such a craft while there is another behind laden with the precious metal."

The schooner came gallantly on, and passed about half a mile east of them. The pirates gazed upon her as she swept by them, but did not molest her. In a short time she was far beyond them, and went safely on to her place of destination.

CHAPTER VI.

"WELL, ladies, the vessel that has just passed us was not the one we expected," said Dick Throttle, seating himself in the cabin by the side of Lucretia Rockwood, and gazing into her face with such an expression of countenance as made the blood almost freeze in her veins. "We expected some sport, but we are disappointed this time. Never mind, you shall hear the music of our guns when a prize comes along worth spending powder upon."

The ladies looked sorrowful and downcast,

but no word escaped their lips. Lucretia turned away her eyes from the monster who sat by her side, and cast them imploringly upon Mrs Appleton, as she would upon a mother.

“ You appear to regret that we were disappointed in the craft,” he continued. “ Perhaps before the sun sets you’ll have the pleasure of hearing the report of the long gun booming over the waters, and loudly calling upon a richly laden vessel to heave too, and pay us proper respect. Ah! Lucretia, there are glorious music in the sounds of cannon at sea, when they open their mouths upon the officers and crew of a ship whose ballast is principally boxes of specie. Such an one we are expecting every hour, and when she does show her white canvas, you shall hear how loudly our guns can speak.”

Lucretia hated to open her lips to speak to the ugly pirate, but her curiosity about the ship which was looked for, was so much excited that she could not restrain herself. She was anxious to find out the name of the ship, if Throttle knew it, and therefore she yielded to her desire and asked the pirate some questions.

“ Are you expecting any particular ship ? ” inquired Lucretia, endeavouring to conceal her anxiety as much as possible, that she might learn all he knew about the ship, if he knew anything.

“ Pirates are always expecting prizes,” he replied. “ We can generally tell by the appearance of a ship how much money she carries.

Boxes of specie and bags of gold is the merchandise for us."

"I didn't know but you knew of some ship with such a cargo," she said, hardly knowing how to form her inquiries, and feeling her anxiety increase every moment.

"We sometimes go into port and learn what ships are to sail," he said. "In this way we make certain what might otherwise be doubtful. It is a good plan, is it not, fair maid?"

"Indeed, sir, I'm entirely ignorant of this kind of business, and God is my witness that I'm anxious to remain in ignorance of it," she replied. "Don't you think it is wicked to murder and rob men and women on the ocean?"

"The law compels no man to be a witness against himself," replied the pirate. "Besides, there isn't so much pain in dying in the way we make folks die as some people imagine. We cut their throats, or knock them down, or perhaps run a sword through their hearts, and it's all over. They don't feel much pain, or if they do, it is for so short a time that it don't amount to much after all. And as to the money, persons are not in want of that after their bodies are thrown into the sea."

The female captives looked with horror upon the man who could speak so lightly and indifferently upon the crimes of murder and robbery; but Lucretia was still anxious to ascertain what he knew about the ship he was expecting to encounter.

"You might have different feelings were you to meet a ship well armed for her defence,"

said she. "I understand many ships do not venture to sail now a-days unless they are prepared with the means of defending her against the attacks of pirates. You would not like to have your throat cut, or be thrown into the sea, or have your neck stretched upon the land."

"It would not be altogether so pleasant as sitting by so pretty a girl as you are," he replied, laying his rough hand upon her shoulder, and gazing into her lovely face.

"You know what my oath is," she said, motioning away his hand, and assuming a stern and courageous look.

"Ah! sweet, but wild one, you know what I have told you, too," he replied. "Remember that pirates keep their word, and execute all their threats. They don't do things at the halves."

"You have the power to take my life, and I have told you to murder me and end all my troubles," she replied. "And now before Heaven and in presence of these witnesses, I tell you so again. But I will never yield to your base desires. I'm young and defenceless I know, but the pain of dying would be pleasure to me when compared with the misery and disgrace of giving up to you."

"Well, my pretty one, you are indeed a resolute girl, and would be a good pirate, dress you up in our trousers and jacket, and put a cutlass in your hands!" he said. "You've courage enough to suffer your own throat to be cut, and why not enough to cut another's?"

And he drew his rough hand across her

neck to show her how it was done, and to impress her more strongly with the fear of dying by the hand of a pirate. She thrust aside his hand.

“There’s poison in the touch of your hand which corrupts the soul, but only death to the body in the edge of the steel,” she cried, assuming a stern manner, and gazing upon him as if she were an accusing spirit sent down from the bright world above to make him feel for a moment the power of conscience which had lain almost dormant for years.

During this time Amelia, the daughter of Mrs Appleton, sat with her hand upon the head of a wolf dog that seemed to have great affection for her, even much more than he did for his master, the pirate captain.

“See that mild and docile girl!” said Throttle, recovering from the slight embarrassment into which he had been thrown by the stern manner and reproving looks of Lucretia. “See! Even the captain’s dog loves her, she is so kind and tame! Better will it be for you, if you become like her, and yield to my power.”

“Never!” she replied in a firm voice, which induced the dog to turn his eyes upon her. “The dog’s heart is not corrupted like yours. It is as it was made, and even your evil example has not been able to pollute it. Well may he sympathise with human misery, and love the innocent being whose hand plays upon his forehead. But his instinct teaches him better than to love so corrupt a heart as beats in your bosom.”

“But she whom the dog so much regards loves his master, and what better is he than I?”

“Well may you ask what better is the captain than one of the crew,” she replied. “He may be better, but there’s no possibility of his being worse; for you have filled up the measure of your iniquity. That girl does not love the master of that little dog. There’s not a chord in her heart that does not vibrate with hate towards him.”

“Bravely said, my smart girl,” he replied, laughing like a hyena. “By the by, you asked me some time since if I expected any particular ship to course this way. Well, young woman, I can answer you, but you will first tell me why you are so curious to know. Are you acquainted with any captain or crew in Boston whom you expect will sail soon? I have it! Perhaps you have a lover whom you expect will sail soon? Ah! you start. I have hit the nail on the head at last, have I? Fortunate for him will it be if he does not sail on our *track*, especially if the vessel he sails in has a good round sum of dollars.”

“I have a lover, and it behoves you to beware of the ship in which he sails,” she replied. “That vessel is armed, and may prove a *terror* to you. The captain and crew have prepared themselves to meet pirate ships, where they may be found.”

“Know you not that I have been on board every vessel which is about to sail from Boston harbour?” he inquired.

"I have no such knowledge, but if you have been there, tell me the name of a single ship which is about to weigh anchor from that port, and I may believe you," she said.

"I saw several which are fast getting ready, but I know of one which sails to-day," he replied.

"The name! The name!" she said. "Give me the name, if you know any."

"Did you ever read of a bird whose kind springs up from its own ashes?" he inquired.

"I don't know what you mean," she impatiently answered, not recollecting the name of any such bird.

"Perhaps the widow can tell you if she feels disposed," he said. "Do you remember the name of any such bird, Mrs Appleton?"

This woman did not feel disposed to answer any question of the pirate's asking, but as the inquiry was an innocent one, she thought she would answer him, thinking it might be less trouble, and perhaps prevent him from asking her another question.

"There is a fabulous bird of that kind called the Phœnix," she replied.

"That's it," he answered. "These widows know more than the young girls after all."

Lucretia started when the word *Phœnix* was pronounced, and gazed wildly round the cabin, but she soon recovered herself, and said — "Is that the name of the ship you expect?"

"It is, for I was on board of her yesterday morning," he replied. "She will be a rich prize. My share of the money, together with what I've already got, will enable me to retire into

private life, and enjoy the fruits of my labours. I shall take you with me, and make you the mistress of a splendid house."

"Did you converse with any one on board the 'Phoenix?'" she inquired, disregarding what he said about her becoming the mistress of his contemplated establishment, and feeling anxious to know if he saw Horace Malcolm.

"I did," he replied. "I had a long talk with a young fellow, but I was a little too old for him. Another young sailor on board called him Horace, but who he is I know not, nor care."

"It is he!" exclaimed the agitated girl, clasping her hands over her bosom, and otherwise manifesting much anxiety.

"Ah! a lover, I suppose," said Throttle, while a grin appeared about his mouth. "Well, you may have the pleasure of seeing his throat cut, that's all."

"His throat shall never be cut by a pirate's knife," she said. "His ship is armed. Beware how you fire upon her; for the moment you show your flag, that moment she will fire your 'Terror of the Ocean,' and sink her."

"Not so fast, young woman," he replied. "Remember I've been on board that ship, have counted the crew, including your lover, and ascertained the number and size of her guns. We've twice the number of men she carries, and one gun much larger than any she has. Think you we are such fools as to attack a ship of superior force to ours. No, no, young woman, we've fought too many battles for that, I can assure you. Dick Throttle knew what

his business was exactly when he was asking questions on board the 'Phoenix.' "

"The ship is much larger than your vessel," said *Lucretia*.

"No matter for that," he replied. "So much the bigger mark for us to fire at—besides, she can't move round upon the water as fast as we can."

"Neither will she feel the shot so much as yours," she said. "Being larger, she can carry off more ball holes. Mark me, pirate! The 'Terror of the Ocean' must haul down the flag, and sink beneath the waves."

The pirate laughed at her prophecies. He believed he had thoroughly ascertained the force of the "Phoenix." He had some fears that they might have taken on board a larger gun after he left, still he did not think that had been done.

"Don't flatter yourself with that notion, fair maiden," he said. "We have one gun that will reach her, while our enemies will be obliged to stand and take it, for they have no gun that will reach us. And think you we should go within reach of her guns when we could keep at a certain distance and bore her through and through? No, no, we should not do that until we had crippled her pretty severely."

"*Another sail! Another sail!*" was now shouted upon deck. *Throttle* flew from the cabin to the deck, while the twins and *Amelia* hung round *Mrs Appleton* as if she could prevent the battle between the two vessels. The wolf dog left *Amelia* and ran upon deck close

at the heels of Throttle, as if he knew what was coming, but he soon returned and stood gazing upon the group, with much anxiety in his countenance.

"There she comes!" exclaimed the captain, addressing Throttle as he hastened on deck from the cabin. "She looms up finely! That is a larger vessel than the one which passed us a short time ago. Here, Dick, take my glass and see what you can make of her."

Throttle took the glass from the captain, and raising it to his eye, looked very steadily at the approaching vessel for some minutes.

"That is a ship, is it not?" inquired the captain.

Throttle still kept the glass to his eye, and was looking so anxiously that he did not immediately answer the captain's question.

"Well, Throttle, I reckon you mean to shoot her through with the glass," continued the captain. "Remember you are not pointing the long gun now, but a spy-glass."

"I know it, captain; but I think I shall have occasion to point the big gun before long, for I believe that ship is the 'Phœnix,'" said Throttle, removing the glass, and taking a look with the naked eye.

"I thought so," replied the captain. "Let her come, I believe we are prepared for her."

"Let me have a view of her," said the mate, taking the instrument, and looking very intently at the coming vessel.

"Yes, that's a ship," continued the mate, still holding the glass to his eye. "There! she turns her nose farther to the east, and means

to pass us outside. Ah! a man is looking at us through a glass, I believe. Yes, there is. She ploughs the sea nobly, and sails rapidly."

"Let her go, and pass us if she will," said the captain. "We'll follow on just so as not to lose sight of her. Time enough to attack and take her two or three hours hence."

The pirates now steered their vessel farther towards the south than they had been running, lest the ship should get too much the start of them.

About the time the pirates discovered the "Phoenix," Horace Malcolm discovered the "Terror of the Ocean," and spread the alarm.

The captain seized his glass and examined her. His glass had a more powerful view than that of the pirates, and he was enabled to see them quite distinctly before Throttle left the cabin.

"She's a strange vessel," said the captain of the "Phoenix." "Here, Horace, take the glass and see what you think of her. I have some fears."

Young Malcolm obeyed the order of the captain, and thoroughly examined the pirate vessel, but he knew not that the loved one of his heart was among her crew. And it was fortunate for him that he did not, for had he known the fact it would have unfitted him for duty.

"Well, Horace, what do you think of her?" inquired the captain.

"She looks suspicious to me," he replied. "My opinion is, that she is a piratical craft."

"I have my fears also," said the captain.

The mate now took a view of her, and expressed the same opinion Malcolm did.

"We'll give her a wide berth, and pass her to the east," said the captain.

"Are we not strong enough to give her battle?" inquired young Malcolm, feeling anxious to sink her in the depths of the ocean.

"That is a question I cannot answer," said the captain. "Our duty to the owners of our ship and cargo requires us to pass them peaceably, and not to commence an attack. If we could be sure of capturing them, I would venture to pitch battle at once, and run the risk of the damage that might be done to the ship, but as we cannot be sure of the victory we must avoid her."

"But suppose she gives us chase, and fires into us?" asked Malcolm, "should you not then heave to and give her battle!"

"Not if we could outsail her," replied the captain. "We must save our vessel and cargo at all hazards. If we are compelled to fight, why then we'll fight so long as there is a shot in the locker."

"I suppose you are right; but I do hate a pirate so much that I really want to knock one on the head and pitch him into the sea," said the brave young Malcolm.

"I am as anxious as you can be, and would fight as long as any other man," said the captain; "but I am only an agent for others who have employed me, and for their interest must we do that which is best, all things considered."

"Well, captain, if they attack us, let us give them a round or two just to let them

know that we are not cowards, at any rate," said William Turell. "My blood boils whenever I think of a pirate. We are well armed, and have stout hearts ; I have no fears."

"Nor I when I have such a brave crew," replied the captain. "We can tell better what to do in case the vessel is a piratical one, and makes an attack on us."

The crews of the two vessels now stood gazing upon each other with anxiety, and watching each other's movements with an interest which none can appreciate unless placed in similar circumstances.

CHAPTER VII.

THE two vessels sped on their course. The "Phœnix" had passed the "Terror of the Ocean," and was nearly a mile and a half ahead of her. The captains of both were watching the motions of each other with eagle eyes. There was no longer any doubts in the minds of the crews as to the character of each vessel. The captain of the "Phœnix" was now entirely convinced that he was pursued by pirates, and the other captain no longer doubted the vessel he was chasing contained the prize which he and his crew were so anxious to obtain.

"Does she gain upon us?" inquired the captain, as he and Malcolm stood in the stern of the "Phœnix" gazing upon the pirate vessel.

"It is difficult to tell," replied Horace. "but it seems to me she does a very little."

"If she outsails us we shall be compelled to fight her," said the captain.

"I sometimes almost wish she might come within reach of our guns; for it seems to me we can take her," said the young sailor.

"She has twice the number of men we have, and they would fight until they died before they would be taken," said the captain. "Although I am no coward, yet I should rather keep out of their way, if we can do so; but if we cannot, we'll do our best to defend our ship. We'll not yield without a severe struggle."

While the officers and the crew of the "Phœnix" were thus conversing, the captain and the pirates were devising their plans.

"We gain upon her, and at this rate we shall come within reach of her in less than an hour," said Throttle, while he was giving orders and assisting in charging the long gun.

"Ah! but few vessels can sail with ours," said the captain. "Herein lies our power and our safety. Charge her home, Throttle. Let them hear one loud report."

"That's already done," said Throttle. "We've filled our stomach as full as it will bear, and when she vomits, they'll feel the contents, or I'm much mistaken."

"No doubt of that, Throttle, when you direct the gun," replied the captain. "It is best to give them a shot as soon as you think you can end our compliments to them. By doing this you will show them the power of the piece, and may frighten them a little. If fear once gets possession of their hearts, they will fall easy victims to us."

"I was making the same calculations myself," said Throttle. "I intend to have her

touched off as soon as I think the ball will strike near them."

Thus they conversed, while they crowded all sail to overtake their prize. The females below were actuated by strange and fearful emotions. From what they had heard they were now certain it was the ship "Phoenix" which the pirates were pursuing. Lucretia's anxiety and curiosity were so great that she even ascended the cabin stairs to take one view of the ship which held her lover, but she obtained only a single glimpse before she was ordered back to the cabin.

"Did you see the ship?" inquired Mrs Appleton.

"I had only a glance at her," replied Lucretia. "Oh! I wish she would take in some sail and let us come nearer to her; and yet, if there should be a battle, he might be killed. O, how I wish I could see Horace Malcolm once more!"

"I wish you could, dear girl," said Mrs Appleton. "But I pray you may never see his mangled corpse lying upon the deck as I did my husband's. O, that was a spectacle appalling to behold, but I and Amelia were compelled to do it in spite of all in our power to prevent it."

The tears flowed freely down the pallid cheeks of this good woman and her daughter. Lucretia and Margaret also wept bitterly.

Time passed on, and it was now near night-fall. The wind, which had been blowing quite fresh all day, now somewhat abated, and lighter breezes swept over the ocean. The females were now aroused from their sorrow and weep-

ing by the loud report of a gun over their heads. They started up and gazed wildly into each other's faces. But one thought was in their minds, but one feeling pressed their hearts, and that was that the battle between the vessels had commenced.

"That's a long distance, Dick," said the captain. "Think you reached them? It is so far I couldn't see the ball strike."

"I don't know, but it was a thunderer," replied Throttle, taking the glass and looking at the "Phœnix." "Whether it hit them or not, it 'll near them; for they appear to be much damed on deck."

"Wait till we near them a little more before you fire again," said the captain. "In a few minutes give them another warning of their fate."

The ball from the cannon struck about six rods astern of the "Phœnix," and made the water fly merrily.

"They have a powerful gun if they can throw a ball that distance," said the captain. "We've no gun on board that can carry more than two-thirds as far. If we find they are determined to fire into us at longer distance than our guns will reach, we must slacken sail so as to be able to 'lo our part in this business. I was suspicious that the rascals had one powerful piece, but we'll not be long annoyed by it before we bring our guns to bear upon them."

"That's right, captain," replied Horace Malcolm, with flashing eye and swelling chest. "Do give us a chance to pour into them, and we will 'lo our duty promptly and faithfully."

"I feel most assured of that," said the captain. "I'm not suspicious that I have a single coward among my crew. That we shall have to give them battle is quite certain now, but we will keep on our course until they fire again. Every moment they are slowly nearing us, but we will take in no sail yet. Let them come up, if they will, and we will return their compliments. I think they are fully determined to capture us if they have the power. A short time will determine the question whether they are attempting to frighten us, or determined to give us a serious battle."

"I think they are really in earnest," said the mate. "And I should not be at all surprised if these two sailors who came on board of our ship at the wharf are among the piratical crew."

"O, how I wish we could have known it!" exclaimed Horace Malcolm. "The more I think of the countenances of those sailors, the more thoroughly am I convinced that they were pirates. I agree with the mate, and have no doubt they are now on board that vessel."

"It is a critical time with us," said the captain, "and we must be calm and collected as well as nerved for the enterprise. Not only a large amount of property is at stake, but our lives also. True courage is one thing, and rashness is another and quite a different thing."

"I'm aware of that, captain, but I burn with indignation, and long to be cutting them down," said the young and noble hearted sailor.

"Let Horace and myself stand at two of the guns," said William Turell. "I, too, feel the workings of indignation in my soul whenever I

see or hear of pirates. And I have good reason to feel so; for I once had an uncle whom I loved, who was most inhumanly butchered by the foul rascals."

A splashing was now heard in the water not more than ten paces from the bowsprit of the ship on the starboard side, immediately followed by the loud report of a cannon which went booming over the bosom of the sea, and dying away to the leeward like distant thunder.

"There! another gun!" exclaimed the captain. "The shot struck the water just forward the bows. We must take in sail and let the scoundrels come nearer, so that we can give them as good as they send."

A portion of the sails were now furled, but enough were left standing to work the ship. Soon her speed was slackened, and she moved slowly through the water. The pirates watched every movement on board the "Phœnix."

"They are taking in sail," said the pirate captain, standing upon the quarter deck, with glass in hand, and viewing the "Phœnix" very sharply. "They are not so many of them by half as we number, my brave lads."

"There are only twenty of them all told; for I learnt the fact on board the ship myself," said Throttle, placing another charge in the gun which had just been fired. "We'll give her another shot, and perhaps we shall strike her next time."

"Yes, give it to her once more, and then we'll change our course so as to keep about the same distance from her," said the captain.

"By her motions she means to try her guns."

said the mate. "We're fast gaining upon her, and shall soon get within reach of her guns. Let us now change our course and veer to the east, or she will give us a broadside."

"Fire!" shouted the captain. "Be ready with the other guns. We've neared her more than I was aware of. They're preparing now to fire!"

Throttle touched off the big gun, and the balls passed over the "Phoenix," carrying away one of the braces, and struck the water several rods beyond her. All was now excitement on board both vessels. The pirate ship had veered to the east and was under full sail, while the "Phoenix" was hauled into the wind, and stood quite still upon the water.

"We're all ready, captain," said Horace Malcolm, standing at the breach of a cannon, and directing its muzzle to the pirate ship. "We can reach them now, but soon they will be out of our reach."

"Then fire! and be sure you waste not the powder and ball," said the captain.

"Aye—we'll have an eye to that," replied the intrepid young sailor, directing his piece according to his best skill and judgment, and giving word to the man with the match to touch her off.

He did so, and quick as lightning the ball went hammering over the waves in a direct line towards the pirate vessel, striking the carriage upon which was placed the long gun, and shivering it into many pieces. Throttle stood near the gun when the ball struck the carriage, and one of the splinters hit his arm.

"Ah! I'm wounded," exclaimed the pirate. "My arm is broken, but I'm not yet killed."

"But the carriage is so much shattered that you cannot work the gun," said the captain, feeling Throttle's broken arm, and advising him to go below.

"I shall stay upon deck and see it out," said Throttle. "I can carry one broken arm about for a while. Give it to them with the other guns, my brave comrades. You're all sound yet. The boxes of specie on board their ship will more than compensate for one broken arm."

"True, my brave Dick," said the captain. "You, with your shattered limb, are worth a dozen of those white livered fellows on board the enemy's ship. Give me you yet. As Throttle says, make our other guns speak to them in tones of thunder, my brave lads. Shoot away her masts, and we'll soon board her, and overhaul her ballast.

No sooner ordered than executed. Another pirate gun spoke, but not so loud as the other. The ball, however, struck the hull of the "Phoenix" just above the water's edge, but did no material damage.

"Ah! it struck between wind and water," said Tom Carver. "I did not elevate the piece enough, but it was a good shot; perhaps it will do more execution next time."

The words were scarcely out of his mouth before two reports were heard from the "Phoenix," following each other in quick succession. One ball whistled over the

captain's head, making him suddenly dodge, while the other struck the gun which Carver had just discharged, and, glancing off, hit one of the pirates, who stood beside Throttle, in the breast, instantly killing him on the spot.

"Ah! Tom, they seem to owe our guns an especial spite," said Throttle. "Oh, my arm pains me most outrageously! I shall be obliged to have it bound up; but I can't leave the deck yet, I must see the business through. That fifty thousand dollars! Well, they shoot pretty straight, that's a fact. Come, Carver, charge again and let them have it. Your gun was hit, but not wounded."

Carver had not the dare-devil sort of courage that possessed the heart of Throttle, for with the exception of the captain and mate, Throttle was the most depraved man among the pirate crew. When the man fell dead by his side, Throttle scarcely noticed him, and if he did give the poor fellow a passing thought it was only one of selfishness—knowing that the more there were killed, the larger would be the dividends of money among the survivors. The dead body was dragged a small distance from the spot where the man fell with as much coldness and indifference as anything else would have been removed that was in the way.

"Never mind the wind of a ball or its music, Tom, but keep charging and firing until you fare as badly as Bill Jenkins there," said Throttle, pointing to the dead man who had just been shot.

The pirates now discharged two guns. The ball of one struck the mainmast of the

“Phœnix” and glanced off into the water, doing but slight damage, but passing very near the head of William Turell; the other shot hit the water nearly a rood upon the larboard side of the ship.

“That came very near my head,” said Turell, addressing young Malcolm and pointing to the place in the mast where the ball struck.

“The scoundrels have some skill in gunnery, and well they may, for they have practised much, I dare say,” said Malcolm, preparing to give the pirates another round.

“Ready, my brave lads,” said the captain. “Courage! Our last shot took effect. One of their men lies dead upon the deck.”

Again the reports of the cannon went booming over the sea, from the deck of the “Phœnix,” immediately followed by two from the pirate vessel.

“Ah! you hit her that time, Tom,” exclaimed Throttle. “I see one of the yards hang down like my broken arm, or the leg of a wounded bird.”

“Yes, but see!” said Carver, pointing to their mizen-mast. “They have hit our mast about ten feet from the deck, and weakened it. Another shot would render it almost useless.”

“That is rather bad; but never mind, pour it into them,” said Throttle.

“Be careful, my brave fellows, not to elevate your guns too high,” shouted the captain.

Again the cannon opened their mouths, and the balls flew across the waters from both

ships. A thick cloud of smoke rose from the vessels and almost concealed them from view.

“Oh, I’m wounded,” cried Carver, “and cannot stand at the gun any longer. Some one must take my place.”

Immediately two ruffian-looking sailors seized the wounded man and carried him down to the cabin, where the females were listening with intense anxiety to the loud reports of the cannon.

“Direct your guns at her masts and rigging rather than at the men on deck,” said the captain of the “Phœnix.”

“See, captain, their main-mast falls!” exclaimed Malcolm; “I thought I should strike her in a good place.”

“Thanks for that!” shouted the captain. “They are preparing to board us. Hoist sail, and let us get out of their reach, and then we can consult upon what is best to be done. One of our men has fallen. I wish not to see another.”

The order of the captain was promptly obeyed, and the ship began to move from the scene of danger. While this was doing, Malcolm and Turell gave the pirates two more shots; but they did not this time fire at the rigging. The ball from the former’s gun killed one of the pirates and seriously wounded the mate, and the one from the gun of the latter shivered the bowsprit, and, without doing further damage, passed into the sea.

The “Phœnix” was soon beyond the reach of the pirate’s guns.

"The cowards are leaving us now our vessel is so much crippled we can't sail quite so fast as they can," shouted the pirate captain. "Lower the large boat and prepare to board them. There is no other way now left us."

"Make all the sail you can and follow us," shouted the captain as he jumped on board the boat.

"Ah, that's a desperate movement," said the captain of the "Phoenix," as he saw the boat coming toward them with all the speed twenty-four oars could give her. "Get out the muskets, my brave lads, and let us be prepared to give them a warm reception. Stand by your cannon, and before they come within reach of the musketry, let them have it."

"Aye, captain, we're here," shouted Malcolm and Turell. "We'll try and tumble some of the rascals into the sea before they reach us."

"Pull away, my brave boys," shouted the pirate captain.

Before the words had fairly escaped his lips, a ball struck the water, close by the boat's side, and the spray flew into the captain's face and wet several of the crew.

"A bold attempt, this, brave lads," said the captain. "They mean to keep us cool by sprinkling. Pull away, and let us get alongside with all possible speed."

The pirates plied their oars as for their lives. Another ball came and broke two of the oars, scattering the splinters over the water and wounding one of the oarsmen.

"We must retreat to the vessel," exclaimed

the pirate captain. "The work is too hot for us. Our boat will go down if we don't get out of their reach."

They now turned and went back to the vessel, glad to make their escape from such peril.

CHAPTER VIII.

"WHAT is your opinion about the matter?" inquired the captain, addressing the mate, and gazing upon the pirate vessel as if he would like to see some more havoc made among them before he left them.

"Do give your opinion in our favour," said Malcolm.

"I will consent for one," replied the mate. "Suppose we take the voice of the crew?"

"I agree to that proposition," said the captain.

"Good!" exclaimed young Turell. "Now, I know we shall have one more shot at the rascals."

"I will put the vote and abide by it," said the captain. "As many as are in favour of giving the pirates one more round will signify it by holding up the hand."

Every hand went up almost simultaneously, and the eyes of Malcolm and Turell sparkled with joy at such a demonstration.

The ship was now put about, and began to move towards the pirates, who were closely watching the movements on board the "Phoenix."

"They've tacked ship, and are coming down

upon us," shouted the pirate captain. "Every man to his post. Fire at the rigging, and we may cripple them as much as they have us."

The "Phœnix" bore gallantly down upon them with every sail spread out to the breeze, and every man of her noble crew in his place.

On came the "Phœnix," under full sail, directly toward the pirates.

"Blaze away!" shouted the captain of the "Phœnix." "Mind the helm."

Soon as the words escaped from the captain's lips, the guns opened their mouths, and the balls were sped over the water. At the same moment the noble ship changed her course, and moved gracefully away from the pirates, not, however, before they had returned the compliment. One of the pirates was shot down, and a portion of the shrouds carried away. One of the balls from the "Terror of the Ocean" struck the "Phœnix," but did no essential damage.

"There go the cowards," shouted the pirate captain. "It is just as I feared it would be."

All hands were now busily engaged in repairing their shattered vessel, but while they did so, she was kept under way in pursuit of the "Phœnix."

Night had now settled upon the ocean. The gallant ship went on her course as if death had made no inroads upon her crew. The two vessels which had so recently been engaged in bloody strife lost sight of each other in the trackless ocean.

Soon after the "Phœnix" had fired her last shot and majestically moved away from the scene of battle, the pirates threw their dead

into the sea, and pursued as fast as the crippled state of their vessel would permit. Knowing where the "Phœnix" was bound, they determined to follow in her wake, hoping they might overtake her in the course of a day or two after their vessel was repaired. Throttle, with his broken arm, sought the cabin where his friend Carver and the females were. Before he came below, Lucretia heard one of the sailors tell Carver that Throttle's arm was broken.

There were several others wounded on board the vessel, and one so dangerously that Sangrado had given him up, and said he must die.

But little sleep was found by any on board the vessel that night. The hands were busily engaged in repairing the damage done to the vessel, while she was still on her course in pursuit of the "Phœnix." Morning came, and the captain was early upon the lookout, with glass in hand, but he could discover nothing but a wild waste of waters. No "Phœnix" was to be seen within the reach of his glass on the pathless sea. A jury-mast had been set up, and every rag of sail was spread out to the morning breeze. The vessel ploughed through the waves almost as fast as she did before she encountered the "Phœnix." The pirates were anxiously looking ahead, expecting to see their intended victim, but another day passed, and night again settled upon the sea, but no "Phœnix" was to be seen. Throttle and Carver were no better, but rather worse. The broken arm was highly inflamed and badly swollen, and the dislocated shoulder was in quite as bad a state. Carver was more patient, and

endured his sufferings with less of petulance than Throttle. He swore but occasionally, while the latter was full of oaths, and let them off in almost every breath. Both were in such a state that they were but ill qualified to make love to the twin sisters. This was a great favour to them, and rendered their situation on board the pirate ship more tolerable than it would otherwise have been.

Several days had now passed, and both vessels were making all the speed they could. The "Terror of the Ocean" had fallen behind the "Phœnix" several leagues, but she was pushed ahead by night and by day with all possible power, for the pirates still hoped to capture the "Phœnix," and secure their prize. Mrs Appleton and the other females made the best of their situation, and hoped even against hope that something might occur which would release them from their horrid confinement among men so corrupt and abandoned to every feeling of humanity as these pirates were. The bloom had already begun to fade from the cheeks of the twin sisters, and sorrow to spread its sickly gloom over their countenances.

CHAPTER IX.

"TAKE in sail!" shouted the captain of the "Phœnix," as the noble ship was under full sail in the vicinity of the Bahama Islands; "the wind freshens, and I fear a gale."

Promptly were the sails furled, and everything on board the ship prepared to meet the

coming storm. The ocean already began to heave, and the ship to toss about as if she were a feather upon the water.

"The wind increases, and this is a dangerous part of the ocean," said Horace Malcolm, addressing his shipmate and personal friend, William Turell, as they were busily employed in furling the main-sail.

"I had much rather meet that pirate vessel again than encounter this storm," replied Turell.

"O, so had I," said Malcolm. "Ours is a noble ship, and will ride out a storm as well as any in the ocean; but if that pirate vessel were here in this gale she would hardly pass through it unscathed."

At that moment the voice of the captain was heard above the winds and the roaring of the sea, shouting—

"A sail! a sail! and in great distress."

"It is that pirate vessel," exclaimed young Malcolm. "On she comes, driven furiously by the winds. By Heaven, I will give her one gun as she passes."

And the brave sailor hurried to one of the ship's cannon, followed by young Turell. They instantly prepared the gun for a shot. Soon the pirate vessel was near, and as she passed not more than a musket shot from the "Phoenix," Turell applied the match to the gun, while Malcolm gave it the proper direction. The loud report mingled with the roaring winds, and was soon borne away to the leeward. The ball struck the stern of the pirate vessel, and rendered her rudder entirely useless. At the same moment the

shrieks of females were heard on board that ill-fated vessel, but the voices were so much drowned by the storm that young Malcolm recognised not the sound of his loved one's voice.

"Females on board!" exclaimed the captain. "Well, the poor creatures must share the fate of their captors. You made a noble shot, my brave lads, and carried away her rudder. She must now be driven upon the shore of one of the islands, or upon the breakers. I pity the women."

"The rudder is carried away!" shouted the pirates at the helm.

"Then we're gone," replied the captain, cursing in his heart the crew of the "Phoenix," and gazing wildly upon the islands and breakers they were fast approaching.

"If we escape the storm unharmed, and that vessel is wrecked, let us go on shore, captain, and see what we can discover," said Malcolm. "Some of the rascals may escape."

"They may escape, but it is not very probable," replied the captain. "We have as much as we can do to look out for ourselves at present, but I think our ship will ride out the gale, although it is a severe one."

On rushed the pirate vessel towards an island, driven by the winds at their pleasure. Even these hardened scoundrels who had braved many dangers by sea and land were now thrilled with horror at the prospect before them.

"Let the boats be in readiness to be lowered, for there are breakers ahead," shouted the captain.

The women now rushed from the cabin, fel-

lowed by Throttle and others of the wounded who had the power of locomotion.

"We're going to the devil as fast as the wind and waves can hurry us," shouted Throttle, as he came upon deck with his arm in a sling. "Prepare the boats instantly, or we're lost."

"And if we do we're lost, for the boats can't live in this wild storm," shouted one of the crew.

The words had scarcely fell from the lips of the pirate before the vessel struck a breaker, and trembled in every joint.

In this moment of desperation the females rushed to the arms of the pirates for protection, forgetting their characters, and only remembering they were men. But the pirates were too much concerned for their own safety to heed the shrieks of the females. The vessel was now fast falling in pieces upon the rocks, and all was confusion and excitement on board. Two boats were lowered upon the raging billows, and the captain, Mrs Appleton, and Amelia jumped into the boat, followed by Throttle, Carver, and the wolf dog; but the two pirates being wounded, and less active than they would otherwise have been, fell between the boat and the vessel, and were buried beneath the waves. Being more fortunate, the dog leaped safely into the boat, and crouched down beside the trembling Amelia. Before Throttle attempted to get into the boat, he looked round for Lucretia, but in the confusion of the moment he saw her not, neither did he see her sister, for they were both at that time locked in each other's arms. The heartless captain pushed the

boat from the vessel before any more of the crew had an opportunity to jump in, and pulled for the shore, which was but a short distance from the sinking vessel.

The pirates were now jumping into the water about the vessel, in the vain hope of reaching the shore by swimming. The other boat was filled to its utmost capacity by the crew. Among these were Lucretia and Margaret, who leaped into the boat just as she was about to leave the vessel. Being overladen, and the waves running high, she never reached the shore, but struck a rock about half way from the vessel to the land, and broke in pieces. Two only of the pirates reached the shore; and, strange as it may appear, a wave bore the twin sisters to the shore, and landed them under a high rock which overhung the water.

The billow upon which they rode carried them safely to this wild place, and laid them carefully upon a shelving rock, as if it were conscious of the precious burden it bore. Finding themselves on a solid rock they aroused from their stupor and fright, and sat up; but their seat was so low that their feet were in the water, while they leaned their heads against each other, and thanked Heaven for their escape from the perils of the sea, but more especially for their deliverance from the hands of the pirates.

The boat which bore the pirate captain, Mrs Appleton, Amelia, and the wolf dog, was wafted by the wind and waves safely to the shore, but landed nearly half a mile west from the place where rested the twin sisters. The surf where

the captain struck the shore was more violent and raging than it was in that part of the island where the twins were. The scene was wild and terrible in the extreme. The pirate stood gazing, without a hat upon his bald head, and his brow wrinkled, upon a fragment of his vessel which was borne rapidly towards the shore, while Mrs Appleton was clasping her daughter to her bosom, and both extending their hands towards Heaven. The wolf dog placed his fore-paws in the lap of Amelia, and turning his head towards the raging waters, growling as if he were angry at the strife of the winds and waves as they beat and foamed upon the rocks. A previous wave bore a fragment of the wrecked vessel upon its white-crested top, and threw it high upon the rocks above the pirate's head. The wave thoroughly drenched them, and would have carried them out to sea again, if he had not, with a strong hand, held by the ragged edge of a rock. The females seized the pirate's coat, and the waves, returning, left them still upon the rock-bound shore. A priest soon after came, and standing near the fragment of the vessel which had been so furiously driven upon the high and craggy cliffs, gazed down upon them in great astonishment and surprise.

He involuntarily shrank back when his eyes fell on the bald head and ugly features of the pirate. He felt as if he were looking upon a wicked man.

After the gale had somewhat abated, the "Phoenix" came to anchor, and the captain permitted Malcolm, Turell, and several more of

the crew to take one of the ship's boats and go in pursuit of the pirate vessel, and ascertain what had become of her. They landed upon the island nearly half a mile from the rock upon which were seated the twin sisters. The rocks were so steep and overhanging where the females sat, with their feet in the water, that it was impossible for them to leave their perilous situation without being drawn up by a rope or taken off in a boat.

As Malcolm and his company landed, they saw the dead body of a man which had been washed up by the waves upon the rocks.

"See!" exclaimed Malcolm, running to the body, followed by Turell and the others. "The vessel has gone to the bottom, and one of the crew lies dead among the rocks yonder."

Malcolm hurried to the body, and, turning it over so that he could see the face, exclaimed,

"It is one of the pirates. Good God! And one of those who came on board our ship before we left Boston. That face I shall never forget."

"His arm is broken," exclaimed Turell, lifting the arm of the dead pirate and examining it. "The bandages are now upon it, but so thoroughly soaked in salt water that they will come off easily from the wound. We wounded him in the battle several days ago, no doubt."

They now threw the body back into the sea, and as they walked along upon the high ledges looking down to the shore, they thought they heard female voices underneath a high rock upon which they stood.

"Hark!" exclaimed Turell. "It seems to me I heard voices below!"

All listened, while Malcolm walked out upon a projecting rock so far that he could look down and see what was underneath.

"My God!" he exclaimed, holding out his arms in surprise, and looking anxiously down under the crag upon which he stood. "I see two females with their heads leaning against each other, and their feet in the water. We must release them from their perilous condition, whether they be the wives or paramours of the pirates or not."

"I know that voice," said Lucretia to her sister. "It is the voice of Horace Malcolm, for no person's voice sounds to my ears like his."

"It can't be Horace, and yet the voice sounded like his," replied Margaret. "Speak, sister, and perhaps he will know your voice, if it is Horace."

"I can't speak so as to be heard, my feelings are so overcome," answered Lucretia, in a voice which told how deep were the emotions of her soul, leaning her head upon her sister's shoulder, and letting her arm drop lifelessly by her side. "You speak, Margaret, and perhaps he will hear you."

Margaret now looked up, and shouted as loud as she could, "Horace, Horace Malcolm!"

"My God! am I dreaming?" exclaimed Malcolm, still standing upon the overhanging crag and looking down upon the sisters. "No, no! it cannot be! I was beside myself."

"Cannot be what?" anxiously inquired Turell.

"Yes, it is them; for I just saw Margaret's head, as she bent forward to look up," exclaimed

Malcolm, while he trembled in every muscle, and his countenance betrayed the extreme anxiety he felt.

"It is who?" impatiently inquired his friend.

"The Rockwood girls! those you've heard me speak of!" replied Horace. "They must have been taken by the pirates when they were out upon a fishing excursion with their father."

"What! your love?" asked Turell, in great surprise. "And her sister to whom you said you intended to introduce me?"

"The same, unless my eyes and ears deceive me, and I'm in the mazes of a dream," replied Malcolm. "Oh! God! if it should prove true! Lucretia! Margaret! are you in that wild place?"

He now heard his name pronounced more distinctly than before.

"It is they!" he exclaimed. "You stay here, Turell, and tell them I shall soon take them away in the boat."

Malcolm and two sailors now started back for the boat. While they were gone the priest, who had discovered the old pirate and the other females, slowly approached Turell, and said, "Young man, what hast thou discovered upon the shore here that you should appear so anxious?"

"Two ladies, sir, who were taken by the pirates, and are now down underneath this overhanging ledge," replied Turell.

"Pirates?" replied the priest. "Was that a piratical vessel which was wrecked in yonder breakers a short time since?"

"It was, sir, and she gave us battle; but we crippled her, and then escaped," said Turell.

"Indeed!" said the priest, in a solemn voice. "I saw the vessel soon after she struck, but I did not think she was a piratical one, but I must confess that I have since had suspicions."

"Why have you since entertained suspicions, sir?" anxiously inquired Turell.

"I saw one man and two females upon the shore round yonder point," said the priest. "The ladies appeared well enough, only much frightened and distressed, but the man had a bad countenance, and his appearance impressed me with the belief that he was a pirate. I have seldom seen such a ruffian-like looking man. Like these females here he cannot well climb the steep rock, but must be taken off in a boat. I was on my way to obtain help, and seeing you gathered here, I called to see what you were assembled for."

"He's a pirate!" exclaimed Turell. "You need not go further for help to secure him or rescue the females. We will attend to that as soon as these ladies are removed from their disagreeable situation, if you will, sir, direct us to the spot where the villain may be found. The infernal crew, sir, fought us hard, and intended to capture our ship, but we were too well armed for that, and injured them more than they did us."

"It has been a very severe gale, young man, and the winds and waves, directed by an overruling Providence, have stopped them in their wicked career, and sent them unprepared into the eternal world."

"As their vessel swept by us in the gale we gave them one shot, sir, and carried away their rudder," said Turell. "That helped them along on that long journey to the other world to which you alluded. But for that, sir, they might have outridden the storm, and lived to murder and rob on the high seas for years to come. We considered that a very lucky shot, for it gave the winds and waves full control over them. A vessel can't do much, sir, in such a gale without a rudder."

"Very true, young man, and thou must acknowledge the hand of Providence in all these things," replied the priest.

Young Turell was so proud of that shot which carried away the rudder of the pirate vessel that he did not feel disposed to share the glory of it with any being but with his shipmate, Horace Malcolm.

Malcolm had now arrived near the place where his love and her sister sat. He was so much excited that he could hardly sit, for the motion of the boat, so it seemed to him.

"Pull away, my good fellows!" he exclaimed, striking twice with his oar, when his companions struck but once. "It is they! How wet and cold they must be!"

The boat gently ran her bow upon the rock, and the young lover leaped from the boat and was soon locked in the arms of the twin sisters. To undertake to describe the emotions of those friends and lovers would be a hopeless task. The feelings which were crowded into that single moment, when they met, can never be described, nor yet experienced, except by those whose fate

may lead them into like circumstances. The sailors took the stockings from their own feet, and put them on the feet of the trembling girls, and wrapped them up with their own garments to keep them warm, for the ocean water had very much chilled their blood.

The twins were taken on board the boat, and made as comfortable as circumstances would permit. The priest continued with Turell and his party on the rock above, where Malcolm left them, and was to be their guide to the place where the old pirate and the other females were.

"We have another adventure," shouted Turell from the rock above Malcolm.

"And pray what is that?" inquired Malcolm. "I ask no other adventure to-day. I'm the happiest man alive."

"One of the pirates and two females are on the shore round the point yonder," replied Turell. "You go along with the boat, and we'll travel by land. A priest is here with us, who will direct the way."

"It is the captain of the pirate vessel and Mrs Appleton and her daughter, who were captured by the pirates several months ago," exclaimed Lucretia, looking most imploringly into her lover's face. "Do haste away, Horace, and save them from the perils of the sea, and from that more horrid fate, the arms of that monster."

"They shall be saved, and the ugly devil shot or taken prisoner," he replied, bending himself down to the oars, as did his companions.

Away glided the boat over the waves along

the shore, while Turell, the priest, and the others kept pace with her upon the land.

They soon came to a place where they could go down to the boat. They went on board, but the priest declined to accompany them, not feeling disposed to face such an ugly-looking fellow as the pirate captain. He had seen him once, and he was not inclined to see him quite so near, as he must, if he accompanied them in the boat. He gave them directions so that they could not miss the place where he was, for it was just a point of ledge that projected out into the sea, not more than a hundred rods distant from them. The boat was rowed off in great haste, while the priest went cautiously to a high bluff where he first saw the pirate, and stationed himself where he could see all, and yet be free from danger himself.

In a short time they rowed round the point, when the pirate and the two females appeared in sight, standing upon the rocks, with the wolf dog close by Amelia.

"It is Mrs Appleton and her daughter, for I see the dog which was on board the pirate ship," exclaimed Lucretia. "And there stands the pirate captain, too. Oh ! I'm afraid he will kill them when he sees us coming."

"No danger of that," replied Horace. "What inducement can he have to do that?"

"Such a wicked man as he needs no inducement to commit any crime," she replied. "He would perpetrate any deed merely for the sake of doing it, with no earthly motive which operates on other men's hearts, and prompts them

to action. I've been with him several days, and know him well."

The boat had now arrived within musket shot of the old pirate and the females. Malcolm took the precaution to stop the boat and proceed no further until he ascertained whether the pirate would willingly yield himself a prisoner or not.

He also had a gun well charged lying by his side in case it might be needed. The pirate turned his eyes upon them, and stood like a statue among the rocks that surrounded him.

"Will you quietly yield yourself a prisoner, or must we resort to force?" shouted Malcolm.

The pirate stood gazing upon them with a sullen look, but made no answer. What was passing in his soul at that moment was only known to himself and to Him who rides upon the whirlwind and directs the storm. He who had commanded a ship, murdered many men, and whose word was law to a whole crew, was now commanded to yield himself a prisoner to a few young stripling sailors. He looked upon them with contempt, and his proud spirit could not suffer him to give an answer to these youngsters of the ocean.

"See! he frowns upon us, and is too proud to answer my question," said Malcolm, while his eye flashed fire, and his heart beat with violent emotions. "I will question the proud villain once more."

"Will you yield yourself a prisoner, and let us carry you to a place where you will suffer the penalty of the law due to your crimes?" exclaimed Malcolm, in a loud voice, laying his

hand upon the loaded gun, and fastening his eyes upon the pirate with a burning gaze.

No answer was returned to the young man's question, but the pirate, turning his eyes upon the young girl who stood trembling two or three feet from him, and clasping her arms about her mother's neck, said, in a voice which struck terror into their hearts, "You shall not live to be another's. These proud young sailors shall never possess your body alive, but if they carry you from these rocks, they shall carry you dead."

And he drew a pistol from his belt, and, raising it, pointed towards his intended victim, but before he pulled the fatal trigger, Malcolm seized his gun, and sped a bullet through his breast. The weapon fell from his hand. He leaped into the air with a half-uttered oath upon his lips, and fell dead upon the rocks. Amelia screamed, and fell into her mother's arms, and both sank down near the dead body of the pirate.

Leaving Amelia for a moment, the dog ran to his lifeless master, put his fore-paws upon his breast, and gazing an instant into his motionless face, hurried back again to the trembling girl, whom he seemed to love more than any other object.

"Ah! the monster is dead, and my daughter yet lives, thanks to Heaven!" exclaimed she, raising her hands towards the skies, and gazing upon the lifeless form of the pirate.

At this moment the boat struck the shore. Lucretia leaped upon the rocks, followed by Margaret, and soon the four women were locked in each other's embraces.

"That was a glorious shot, Horace," said young Turell, as he jumped from the boat. "He'll command no more piratical vessels, make captive no more ladies, nor stain his hands again in human blood."

Malcolm approached the dead body of the old pirate, and, looking down upon his ghastly face, said, "He looks wicked even in death. Let us carry the body to our ship and show it to the captain and crew."

"That's a good move," replied Turell. "They will rejoice to see the old rascal."

"Nay, nay, do not take it with us!" exclaimed Margaret, looking most imploringly into the young sailor's face, and laying her delicate hand upon his shoulder.

He gazed into her deep blue eyes, and felt the trembling hand upon his shoulder. It was enough! That look and that touch thrilled his soul with strange emotions, and brought vividly to his recollection all that Horace Malcolm had told him of the beautiful Margaret.

"No, we will not carry the body to our ship, but throw it into the sea to be devoured by the sharks if they will feed on such a vile carcase," said Turell, gazing into the finely-moulded face of Margaret, and feeling some premonitory symptoms of love rising in his soul.

"A sudden change of opinion truly!" said Malcolm, smiling and winking very slyly. "There are some causes in the world which sometimes produce very sudden effects upon young men's hearts. I have changed my opinions also. Let us throw the carcase into the sea."

No sooner said than done. And the body of

the pirate was seen bounding against the rock-bound shore by the action of the waves, as the party with light hearts and joyous countenances stepped on board the boat, and started for the ship.

We will not undertake to describe the joy felt on board the "Phœnix" when Malcolm and his party arrived and communicated to the captain and crew all they had seen and done. The ship proceeded on her way prosperously, and in due time returned to the port from which she weighed anchor. Mrs Appleton and her daughter were restored to their friends, and the wolf-dog, seeming rather to rejoice at the death of his master than to regret it, still continued the faithful companion of the fair Amelia until his death.

Young Malcolm and Turell married the twin sisters soon after their return, and, for awhile resided in the humble lodge of the old fisherman. In a few years, however, they left the paternal home, and removed to the town of Boston, where they became the most active, intelligent, wealthy, and highly respected sea captains that sailed from that port.

THE

OLD MAN OF THE WRECK.

A ROMANCE OF

STORMS ON SEA AND LAND.

THE
OLD MAN OF THE WRECK.

CHAPTER I.

BETWEEN Dunwich and Aldborough, about half way, on the coast of Suffolk, there is a small indentation in the shore, and into this empties a small stream known as Mundham River, yet it hardly deserves the name of river, for it is but a moderate-sized brook at best. To the south of the stream, and at a short distance from of the sea, was situated a large and elegant manor house known as Linden Hall, and it was the dwelling of Sir William Brentford, a wealthy old baronet who owned many tenements in the adjoining district.

The occupants of the hall were Sir William Brentford, his son Thomas, a young man five-and-twenty years of age, and a girl named Belinda Warner. This latter person was an orphan, and connected with the old baronet by way of marriage. Her father was an earl, very wealthy, and at his death, which occurred a few years previous to the time of which we write, he gave his child in charge to Sir William, and also placed his vast property in the same keeping. Besides these there were any number

of servants, both male and female, for the wealthy baronet kept a great table, and lived for the animal luxuries of life.

There had been a sort of hope before Lord Warner died that Belinda and Thomas Brentford should marry with each other, but after an intimate acquaintance of some five years they were only on terms of common friendship, and totally without love for each other.

Thomas Brentford was a good-looking youth of ordinary intelligence. His features were regular, but he was vain and proud, and his bearing towards his inferiors was haughty and overbearing.

Belinda Warner was about eighteen years of age, tall, and well-proportioned, but not very comely in appearance, though some might have called her handsome.

When Belinda Warner was perfectly good-natured she looked well enough, and at such times she might even have been called pretty. But very often she was sulky and peevish, and had a peculiar faculty of making herself miserable without any just cause.

Sir William had seen the noon of life, and his days were drawing fast towards their evening. He had lived the full span of three-score-and-ten, and his frame was still stout and strong. He had seasons of strange melancholy, and it required much social levity to bring him out to real enjoyment. Whenever he was left alone, the clouds came upon his brow, and the ~~sad~~ light dwelt in his eyes. Most people thought him a happy old man, for he lived his ~~pleasures~~ before the world, while what of

sorrows he had were hidden from the world's gaze.

It was a clear afternoon in early summer, and the lawn and the garden of Linden Hall were clothed in their regal robes of foliage and flowers. There was a low rumble of wheels in the distance upon the Dunwich road, and the old baronet heard it.

"Somebody must be coming to the hall," he said, as he walked out upon the broad piazza; and his words proved true, for ere long the carriages were at the landing steps, and in a moment more a middle-aged gentleman jumped out upon the piazza.

"Lord Tiverton, upon my soul!" exclaimed the baronet, hastening forward and grasping the new-comer's hand. "Why, bless you, old boy, the sight of you is like an angel. Ha, ha, ha."

Tiverton returned the old man's grasp with a hearty good will, and then they adjourned to the house. Lord Arnot Tiverton was Earl of Winchester. He was a portly, healthy-looking man in the prime of life, and one who seemed to enjoy the good things of earth with all zest. Lord Tiverton and Sir William Brentford had long been on terms of the utmost intimacy, and their friendship was mutual and abiding.

Wine was drank, and all the affairs of the day which presented the least interest were discussed. Then Tiverton opened the especial business which had brought him down from Hampshire.

"Sir William," he said, shoving his glass one side, and drawing his chair closer up,

"you have a girl—a ward—living with you?"

"Yes," returned the baronet, turning round and elevating his eyebrows.

"And who is she?"

"Well, her father was the Earl of Ixworth. You remember it was a title made on purpose for him in consideration of his services on the Peninsula. The title died when he died, but the revenue of ten thousand a-year comes to the girl."

"That's good," said Tiverton, with an air of appreciation. "That's decidedly good. Now, how old is the girl?"

"Just eighteen, I believe—perhaps a few months over."

"And that's good," continued the earl, with evident satisfaction. "And is the girl good-looking?"

"Well, as for that, every man must be his own judge. I call her a fair-looking girl."

"And her disposition?"

"So-so," replied Sir William, with a shrug of the shoulders. "Most of the time she is pretty good-natured. But she aint ugly—not a bit of it—only sometimes she seems to be a little sulky like. It is natural, you know, to some. But on the whole, I call Belinda Warner a good sort of a girl."

"Now, one question more: Have you any particular plans laid out with regard to her future life?"

"Why—as for that—I should say, not exactly. I did mean that she should marry with

my son Tom; but Tom is a graceless dog—he won't do it."

"Now," resumed Tiverton, after a few moments' silence, "I'll tell you my business. You know my son—Albion, his name is—is in the navy. He is a most excellent officer, and has already received the highest encomiums from his superiors. He is now a passed midshipman, and his commission for a lieutenancy is already made out and signed by the Admiralty. But the truth is, the young dog is too wild, and they won't give him his epaulettes until he calms down a little. He is only twenty years old, but I'm determined to marry him to somebody. He's got some queer notions, and 'twill take considerable of a girl to suit him, but if you say you'll give your ward up, he shall marry her at anyrate. Now, what say you?"

"Of course I will, with all my heart. You shall have her, my lord—that is, provided your son will take her for a wife."

"*If* he'll take her," repeated the earl, with marked emphasis. "By the dome of St Paul's," he added, bringing his fist down upon the table, "if I say so, the matter is settled. He will do as I bid him."

"Then you can do more with your son than I can do with mine," remarked Sir William.

"What!" exclaimed the earl, starting to his feet, "do you think my son would dare to disobey me? Let him try it! I'd disinherit the dog as quickly as I'd tread on a spider."

Tiverton sank down into his chair, and when he saw the smile upon Sir William's face, he

wondered if he hadn't been making himself slightly ridiculous.

"Excuse me," he added, while the passion-marks left his face. "Excuse me, my old friend; but this idea of my son's disobeying my orders rather touched me. But never fear on that account. Just say that I may have her, and I'll answer for the rest. She shall be a wife in less than a twelvemonth."

"But when will Albion be here?" asked the baronet.

"O, yes—upon my soul I liked to have forgot that. His ship is at Sheerness, and he has a leave of absence for three months. There is a transport coming round to Yarmouth with a mess of provisions, and he takes passage in her. Very likely she'll be off here sometime tomorrow."

The baronet gave his consent, and so the plan was settled. A noble-hearted, wild young midshipman was to be forced into wedlock ~~as~~ all events and costs. We shall see.

CHAPTER II.

ON the following morning Thomas Brentford was early on the watch for the transport. He was some five years older than Albion Tiverton, but he had known the young midshipman when a boy. All the forenoon he watched and just as he was about giving up with hunger and fatigue, he discovered a white sail coming around the heights of Aldborough. He hastened down to the little bay where one of his father's boats was in readiness, and having got the

boatmen seated at their oars, he put off. Yet he had some time longer to wait, for it was full half an hour before the transport came up and hove to; but when she did so, Thomas was quickly at the gangway, and as soon as his boat's painter was secured inboard he went up over the side. Near the gangway, he saw a young man dressed in the uniform of a midshipman, and he at once recognized him as Albion Tiverton.

"Ah, my boy, don't you know me?" cried Thomas, removing his hat, and leaning forward.

"Eh? 'Tis Tom Brentford—old Tom himself," said Albion.

"Not very old, though," returned Tom, laughing, as he stepped forward and seized his friend by the hand. "But come—my boat is alongside, and we'll be off."

As soon as young Tiverton had returned the salutation, he turned to the commander of the transport and informed him that a boat was alongside for him. Accordingly the midshipman's luggage was soon on deck, and with the assistance of four stout men it was lowered into the boat. Albion exchanged warm farewells with the officers of the vessel, and then he followed Tom to the boat. The painter was cast off, the boat's head shoved around, and soon afterwards the transport filled away and stood on her course again.

Albion Tiverton was a stout, full-built youth, with a vast quantity of bone and sinew. In stature he was about medium height, straight and broad shouldered, with a full, expanded

chest, and ample, well-proportioned limbs. His face was somewhat bronzed by long exposure to sunshine and storm, but that did not detract from his real manly beauty.

There was much contrast between the two friends. Thomas Brentford had none of Albion's sunny smiles and sparkling humour, nor did his face show any of that depth of soul which beamed forth from the countenance of the other. Yet the two were destined to find much enjoyment together, for they both had the will to seize upon pleasure wherever they could find it.

"I say, Tom," uttered the midshipman, when the boat was about half way ashore, "where's the governor?"

"He's at the hall."

"So I feared. Why couldn't he clear out before I came?"

"But you ain't afraid of him?" suggested Brentford.

"O, no. He's one of the best fathers in the world. Only I shall be sure to get a regular lecture now, and I'd rather kiss the boatswain's daughter any time."

"*Kiss the boatswain's daughter?*" queried Tom.

"Yes. Don't you know what that means?"

"Upon my soul I don't."

"Well, I'll tell you. You see when a middy happens to go it *very* strong on the wrong tack he sometimes gets a taste of the cat, or a rope's end, and to facilitate that delectable operation, Mr Middy is lashed to the breech of a gun. He has to bend over and hug the gun with

both arms—and that is called kissing the boatswain's daughter!"

By the time the boat reached the shore, the oarsmen had made up their minds that the young midshipman was a capital fellow, and they conceived a strong attachment for him forthwith.

It was near the middle of the afternoon when Albion reached Linden Hall, and he was soon introduced to its inmates. The old baronet was glad to see him, and so was his father; and the face of Belinda wore an extra wreath of smiles as she held out her hand for the handsome young officer to shake. Sir William had been instructing her, and she had promised to do the best she could. And her duty was not likely to be a very hard one, for she liked the youth the moment she looked upon him.

Lord Tiverton held a long conversation with the baronet upon the subject of informing Albion of his intentions, and it was finally concluded that the young man should not at present know why he was to remain at Linden Hall. Perhaps, if he were told of what his fate was to be, he might at once, in a spirit of rebellion, conceive a dislike for the girl, and that would not answer. So Albion was to remain in ignorance of his father's intentions for one month, and during that time he was to be thrown into Belinda's company as much as possible, and she was to make herself as agreeable as could be.

Lord Tiverton saw Belinda alone, and he found that she was already smitten with the beauty and wit of his son. This flattered the

earl not a little, and it moreover made the maiden more comely in his eyes. In fact, he was convinced that Belinda Warner would make his boy a most excellent wife, besides having the faculty of holding his wild passions in a prudent check.

On the next day Tiverton took his leave, promising to call again in one month. Albion bade him good-by, and promised to behave himself as he ought. He did love his father, and tears stood in his eyes when he saw the old family carriage roll off. But the stout earl did not know the whole heart of his boy.

Now the two young men were left for a while to themselves, and they enjoyed their sports with zest, and for several days they were left to hunt and fish, and to ride and walk, as they pleased. Thus a week passed away, and at the end of that time Sir William remembered that he had business at Ipswich, and Thomas must accompany him. To this arrangement all manner of objections were made, but the baronet overruled them all. Then Tom was determined that Albion should accompany them, but to this the old man objected. He would not have Belinda left alone. Master Tom expressed some very hard wishes concerning business and Belinda, but to Ipswich he went with his father, and young Tiverton was left to take care of Belinda, the baronet only meaning to be gone over one night.

The young officer did not feel very much at home in Miss Warner's company, for he had seen enough of her to know that her disposition and habits were not at all congenial with his

own, yet he resolved to make himself as agreeable as possible on the present occasion, and as soon as they were seated in the drawing-room for the evening, he commenced to remark on the difference between life on shore and life upon the ocean. She listened very attentively, but only replied in monosyllables.

Belinda at length talked some, but what she said was only a mass of meaningless twaddle which had neither sense nor thought. There was something in her tone and manner which Albion could not fathom. She seemed to lean towards him with a strange sort of interest, and yet the light of her countenance betrayed nothing save childish affection.

After all other subjects were exhausted, the young man happened to think of something he had seen, and he seized upon it as a subject for question.

"Ah, Miss Warner," said he, trying to look animated, "I saw you speaking with a young lady last evening in the park. Who was she?"

"O," returned Belinda, answering more quickly than she had before done, "that was only a poor fisher girl who sometimes comes up here to the hall with fish. I was not conversing with her, sir—only answering a question. I would not refuse to answer a simple question, even to one so low as she."

"But is the girl virtuous and honest?"

"I suppose so. I don't know anything to the contrary. Indeed I hope so, for I could not wish harm even to one so low as she is."

For some moments Albion did not speak. There were strong emotions at work in his

bosom. He had discovered a new feature in his companion's character, and it made him feel unpleasantly, to say the least.

"I noticed the girl," he at length said, "and I thought her appearance was very neat and becoming. Does she live with her parents?"

"She lives with her mother—she has no father. She catches fish in the river. She has permission from Sir William—and I have no doubt that she takes quite a number. I think I have heard that she supports her mother."

"Do you know her name?"

"Alice Woodley, I think. I have been so told. I never asked her, for I make no conversation with such persons—I don't think it safe. Once I suffered some familiarity on the part of a low-born girl, and afterwards she even bowed to me in the street while I was in company with several ladies of my acquaintance. It was very annoying, I assure you."

"It must have been," uttered³ Albion, with ill-concealed contempt.

The conversation continued for some time longer, and when young Tiverton retired for the night he had seen pretty clearly through Miss Warner's character; and he had done this the more clearly from the fact that he had not premeditated any such plan. She had opened her natural disposition, and it was a most unpleasant one to him. Upon his noble, generous heart her smallness of human feeling struck most chillingly.

Naturally of an open and frank disposition, his life upon the wild ocean had served to develop more fully the real characteristics of

his nature. He had never learned how to dissemble or affect, and it made him feel disagreeable to see others do so. He had seen enough of ocean life, among the stout hearts of British seamen, to show him that the brightest soul-gems often dwell beneath the roughest exteriors. So he never looked upon the outer person for the thing he was to love or dislike. Then, again, he had learned to read character easily, and he had read the character of Belinda Warner most truly.

CHAPTER III.

ON the following morning, Albion met Belinda in the breakfast-room, and he caught her just as she was in the act of throwing a pewter basin at the head of one of the serving-women. She turned very red when she saw the young officer, and she would have stammered forth some apology, but he did not stop to hear it. He passed directly out through the wide porch into the garden, and there he remained until the bell rang for breakfast. He went in, but Belinda was not at the table, and he was glad of it. He finished the meal, and then strolled off alone towards the shore, and sat down upon a rock. He wished that Tom were with him, but Tom would not return till evening, and he must pass the day alone, for he was determined not to go back to Miss Warner's company.

As he sat there upon the rock he looked off upon the other side of the bay, near the sea coast, and he saw a small cot surrounded by rosebushes and shrubbery, and he wondered if

that was not where the Widow Woodley lived. It seemed a charming spot, and he thought he should like to find an excuse for visiting it, but he knew them not, and as for framing a falsehood for the purpose, he had no such desire. Yet he thought he should like to see the girl whom he had once seen in conversation with Belinda. He had never seen her face, but he knew that her form was exquisite—and then he knew that she had native grace, too, for he had seen it in her movements.

“Sometime I shall see her,” he murmured to himself. “She comes to the hall with fish, and —. But what is she to me? Pshaw!”

Then Albion’s eye chanced to fall upon one of Sir William’s pleasure-boats, and on the instant he determined to take a sail. It was but short work for him to cast loose the sails and let go the moorings, and in a few moments more the sloop was standing out to sea, for the wind was quite fresh, but none too fresh to suit the taste of the adventurer.

Albion found that his boat was an excellent sailer, and on he went, with the spray leaping off like snow to the leeward, and while he thus sailed he could not help thinking if Miss Warner missed him. And he laughed outright as the idea presented itself.

At length he went about and stood upon the opposite tack, and thus he stood on until he was very near to the cot where he supposed Alice Woodley lived. He saw a female form at the door of the cot, but he was sure it was not the one he had seen before. Soon, however, there came another form in sight from towards

the river. That was Alice, surely. Yes, the same light, buoyant step, the same graceful movement, and the same sylph-like form. But the youth found that he was running dangerously near the shore, and he put about again, and when he next looked around, the maiden was gone. He saw a light skiff upon the beach in front of the cot, and he wondered if it belonged to Alice. Then he said "*pshaw*" again as the thought came to him of how foolish he was making himself in thus thinking of a perfect stranger, whose face, even, he had never seen.

On stood the noble boat, and with a feeling of old friendship did the youth snuff up the fresh air. And as he sailed, and steered his craft just which way suited him best, he began to imagine himself the commander of a ship; and he saw officers bowing to him, and half a thousand men awaiting his command. Then he commanded a fleet, and his broad pennant floated proudly from the mast-head.

Thus the youth sailed on in his day-dream, heeding not that the hour of high noon had passed. The breeze was fresh and sweet, and the sky was clear as the brow of an angel. His face was turned toward the broad bosom of the German Ocean, and nothing ahead broke upon his vision to disturb his reverie.

At length Albion Tiverton uttered an exclamation of surprise as he saw how far he had sailed, and more surprised still was he when he looked up and saw the sun far down from its zenith on the road to evening. With hurried, yet careful, movements he put his boat before

the wind, and started back towards the shore he had left. He looked ahead, and straight towards the bay he went, but he was not upon the same track by which he had gone out, although to the right he could see the small cot among the rose-bushes and sweet thorns. He thought he saw upon the door-stone of the humble dwelling a female form, and she waved a handkerchief in her hand. Then she stared down towards the beach, and the kerchief was again waved high above her head. It was the maiden, for the matron could not have moved so quickly to the seaside.

Our hero looked about upon the broad expanse of waters, for he expected to see some other boat to which the signal was made, but none was in sight. Could it be that she was waving this signal to him?

Once more Albion looked towards the bay, and as his eye spanned the distance he detected a spot directly ahead where the waves rolled unevenly and were broken. The boat was flying on like a frightened dolphin, and the strangely-marked place was directly under the bows.

Albion started to his feet and uttered a cry of horror. With all his might he pushed his helm down, but 'twas too late. The sunken rocks which he knew not of were in waiting, and while he yet stood up and urged his helm down the boat struck. There was a stunning crash, and the youth was thrown forward upon the deck. Then there came a tremendous motion, and directly the stricken bark sank over upon her side, and Albion Tiverton felt the cold flood swallowing him up. Within reach he saw

a board—it was one of the light quarter thwarts—and he seized it, and it helped to bear him up.

The youth cast one longing look upon the capsized boat, but he knew that he could not reach it, and then, with a fervent prayer upon his lips, he struck out for the distant shore. The board was some assistance, but only a very little—he had to exert all his strength to rise above the surface, as wave after wave knocked him under.

Once he looked towards the cot where he had seen the maiden, but he could see her no more. But he knew now, though, why she had waved her signal.

At length the youth's strength began to fail him. He cast his weakening gaze upon the shore, and it was yet a long, long way off. He knew that the ocean grave was opening beneath him, but he had no power to escape it. All his energies were gone—all, all. He was conscious of pain about the head, as though some mighty power were tearing his hair out by the roots. There was a struggle—a slipping of something about his shoulders that felt like the cold folds of a snake, and the youth had sense enough to feel that some dwellers of the great deep had seized upon him to devour him. The thought sent a thrill through his frame, and with one last effort he put forth both his hands and closed them upon something firm and hard. Then he strained every fainting nerve, and he leaped high up from the monster his imagination had painted. He felt the folds gathering more firmly about him, and then, as the last spark of vital energy fled, he folded his arms to sink.

But he sank not far. The rushing of the waters in his ears was gone, and he felt a freezing chill in every nerve. He opened his eyes, and a blinding sensation followed—he could see nothing but a blaze of red, glaring light, that darted painfully to his brain—and when he closed them again the night of utter unconsciousness had gathered about him.

CHAPTER IV.

ALEBION TIVERTON opened his eyes, and the broad light of day shone upon him. He felt but little pain—only a parched sensation about the mouth, and a numbness of his limbs. The memory of a frightful dream came over him, and he closed his eyes to think. He remembered that he had taken a boat and sailed out upon the sea, and also how far he had gone. Then came the memory of the signal from the shore, of the sunken rocks, and of the life-struggles that followed. A moment his mind dwelt upon these recollections, and then, with a wild cry, he leaped up and gazed fearfully about him.

“Hallo! Al., my dear boy. Alive and safe. God be thanked!”

The youth started further up, and his gaze fell upon Thomas Brentford, who sat by his side.

“O, Albion, what an escape you have had,” continued Tom, as he gazed earnestly into our young hero’s face.

The young midshipman gazed about him, and his mind was clear and strong. He found himself now sitting upon a bed, the snow-white

coverlid of which had been drawn closely over him, and he was in a small room, neatly, but plainly furnished.

At the windows he saw honey-suckles creeping up over light trellises, and roses clustering thickly about them. Beyond he could see the blue ocean stretching away into the viewless distance.

"Tom," he said, stretching forth his hand and resting it upon his friend's shoulder, "how long have you been here? Where am I?"

"You are in Dame Woodley's cottage, and have been here since last night. O, Al., you have no thought of how frightened we were. We came home just at sundown last night, and found you gone. Some of the servants said you went down towards the bay, and down there I hastened after you. I saw that our sloop was gone, and I looked out to sea, and there I saw the boat, hard and fast, capsized upon the Imp's Rocks. The sails were snapping in the wind, and the sea was breaking over the hull.

"My heavens, for a while I was almost crazy. I knew not what to do. At first I started back towards the hall after assistance; then I turned to the shore again, and determined to swim out to the dory and get another boat that lay at anchor in the bay. But while I was beginning to strip I heard some one call out to me from the opposite side of the bay, and I saw Dame Woodley. She told me you were at her house. I came and found you on this bed, insensible. A docter had already been called, and he said there was no danger. Then I sent word home all about what I had found. My father came

over, and after he had seen that you were well provided for, he went back, and left me here, and here I have been ever since. It is now near ten o'clock in the forenoon. Now tell me how you feel?"

Albion instinctively stretched out his arms, and drew up his legs, and after he had made the trial he said:

"I am pretty strong—pretty strong. But tell me—"

He hesitated, and before he could collect his thoughts upon the subject that struggled up to his mind, Tom interrupted him.

"Now, you just lie down again and catch a bit more rest, and I will hurry home and get the carriage. Lie quiet, now, and when I come back I'll tell you all about it. You will, won't you?"

"I'll try to," returned Albion, his mind still wandering off upon the subject that had taken possession of his thoughts.

"O, you must, for I certainly won't leave you unless you promise to remain quiet. My father is most anxious, and he would be here now, only his gout prevents him. And then there is Belinda—she would have fainted last night if she had known how. It was as good as a play at the theatre. But forgive me—I mustn't make sport of such a thing. Now, you'll be quiet, Al.?"

"Yes—I will."

And with this assurance young Brentford started off after the carriage. After he was gone, Albion lay back upon his pillow and thought of the dreadful scene that had passed

—and he wondered what miracle had saved him.

For a long while he pondered upon the subject in all its bearings, and still he was bewildered and at fault, for let him think of what part he would, the memory of the signal upon the seashore would keep itself foremost in his mind.

At length our hero felt the parching sensation coming back to his lips, and he looked about for drink. He saw a pitcher standing upon a table near him, and he reached forth and took it up, but there was nothing in it. By the side of the pitcher stood a bell, and this the youth rang. Shortly afterwards he heard a light, almost imperceptible footfall at the door, but no one entered. He listened, and he thought he could hear a brushing against the door, accompanied by a low, deep breathing, as though some one were anxiously listening there.

“Let me have a drink, some one,” cried Albion, feeling sure that his request would be heard.

The light footstep was heard again, but this time it moved more quickly, and receded from the door. Not many minutes had elapsed, however, before the door was opened, and a male form entered.

“My mother is out, sir, or she would have answered your first call; but I have taken the liberty to bring you both water and wine, and I trust your own judgment will tell you which will be the most safe for you.”

So spoke the person who had entered, and the words fell upon the listener’s ears like the

notes of a sweetly warbling bird, save that they were tremulous with evident timidity, and bore an air of plaintiveness.

Albion looked up, and he saw the maiden of his day-dream. He saw the long curls of sunny-brown hair, as they swept down over a pair of shoulders that might vie with the sculptor's marble—he saw the open, smooth brow, with its load of intellectual wealth—he saw her deep, large, lustrous, blue eyes, with depths like the bosom of a crystal lake, and he saw her whole face, with its more than matchless beauty and loveliness. Over the whole countenance dwelt a halo of sweet purifying truth, and in every feature struggled forth the great soul that was made for sympathy and virtue. The youth had dreamed of beauty, but never had such perfect purity visited his imagination.

“Dare you taste the wine?” she asked, as she set the things down upon the table.

“Yes, yes,” Albion uttered. He saw that his ardent gaze had made the maiden timid, and he had the good sense to withdraw it. But he had seen enough, for he had transferred the image to his memory.

She filled a glass partly full of wine, and having poured in some water, she handed it to him. He drank it, and asked for more.

“Be not afraid,” he said, as he noticed that the girl hesitated. “I am only benumbed and thirsty. Let me have another draught like that.”

The girl hesitated no longer, but having poured out the beverage, she passed it over, and as soon as the youth had drank it she said:

"I will leave these things where you can easily reach them, and of course you will be careful."

She spoke thus, and would have then turned from the apartment, but Albion quickly called her back.

"You are not very busy?" he said, gazing once more earnestly upon her.

"No, sir," she timidly replied, stopping near the door and turning.

"Then sit thee down here by my side, and tell me of what has happened."

"Master Thomas will tell you all, sir," said the maiden, trembling.

"But I cannot wait. I am racked with curiosity to know. Did I not see you upon the beach yesterday, waving a signal to me?"

"Yes, sir," she whispered, while she trembled more than before.

"You waved the signal to me," he said, "and it was to warn me of the danger that lay before me?"

"Yes," returned Alice, shuddering with the recollection of the scene. "I knew you were running directly for the Imp's Rocks, and that if your boat struck them she would surely be wrecked. I saw you first from the window—this very window here—and I ran out, and went down to the beach, but I could not make you understand. I saw you when you struck."

"Yes, yes," whispered Albion. "I saw you there only a moment before, but how was I saved?"

"Master Thomas will tell you, sir. He knows all about it."

"And how did he learn?" asked the youth, gazing keenly into his companion's face. "Did not you tell him?"

Alice Woodley looked into the youth's face, and after she had overcome the tremulous emotion that seemed almost to tie her tongue, said:

"When I saw your boat strike the rocks, I was at first almost paralyzed, but the thought of your danger quickly called me to myself, and without waiting to call for assistance, or to inform my mother where I was going, I ran to my own light skiff which lay upon the beach, and shoved it off, and then with all my might I started to row out to the rocks. When first I looked, after I had put off, I saw that you had struck out for the shore, and from the manner in which you handled your arms, I judged that you had some support. The terror of your situation lent me unwonted strength, and my light bark sped rapidly over the waves.

Before I reached you, I saw plainly that your strength was failing, and once I was sure that you had sunk. But you came up again, and in a moment more the bow of my skiff grazed your shoulders. I dropped my oars and sprang forward just in time to seize you by the hair of your head as you were sinking again. I was able to lift your head above water, but with all my strength I could not raise you up. I think I was nearly frantic then. But my presence of mind did not wholly leave me. An unseen power was with me, and a voice seemed whispering in my ear—'*His life is thine!*'—But what ails thee?" the maiden asked, suddenly stopping in her narrative.

"Nothing, nothing," uttered Albion, starting. "I was only remembering the terrible sensations that thrilled through my soul at the moment of which you then spoke."

Ah—there was another thought mingled with that—and it was of his day-dream—it was of the form that came to him upon the foam-crest of the wave. But he spoke not of it.

"Go on," he continued, sinking back once more. "Go on."

"At that moment," resumed Alice, "I noticed the painter of my skiff, which lay coiled up at my feet, and while I held your hair with one hand, with the other I slipped a bight of the painter down over your shoulders until it caught beneath your arms. This gave me a better hold upon you, and just as I was considering what means I should next adopt, you threw both your hands suddenly up and caught the bows of my boat with a death-like grasp, and I felt that you were trying with all your strength to get on the gunwale. Then I saw that your energy was gone, for you would have sunk wholly back had I not caught a turn of the painter about the forward thwart. There you lay, and after a while I managed to get you on board. I never could have got you over the side without upsetting the boat, but you came in over the bows, and came in safely. As soon as you were placed as well as I could place you, I bailed out the water which had come in, and then resumed my oars. It was some time before I could do more than keep my skiff's head towards the shore; but at length my strength came back to me, and I reached our

beach without further trouble. My mother helped me to bring you here, and here my mother cared for you and nursed you. She is a good woman, sir."

The maiden bowed her head as she closed, and in a moment more she felt a hand upon her arm. It was a gentle pressure, and she raised her eyes to the youth's face. Tears were rolling down his cheeks, and he drew the maiden nearer to him. He drew her face down to his own, and he imprinted a warm kiss upon her leaning cheek, and then he murmured:

"God bless you—bless you for ever."

It was all he could say. That movement and those words were the result of noble, generous impulse, and the spirit that gave them birth seemed to pervade also the bosom of the maiden, for she did not start when she felt the kiss upon her cheek, nor did she speak when she heard the blessing that was breathed for her. She only bowed her head upon the pillow, by the side of the man she had saved, and tears she could not keep back flowed forth, in sweet, pure drops.

Soon there came the sound of carriage wheels upon the ears of those two youthful life-pilgrims, and Alice started up and would have left the room without speaking, but Albion started to his elbow and detained her.

"Pardon me," he said, taking her hand, and gazing fondly into her sweet face, "pardon me, for I am almost wild now. You know little of the heart you have touched with your heavenly wand. We shall meet again. You shall study my soul, and know its every thought and feel-

ing. You shall know me better. One word—speak to me one word: Is your heart all your own? When I came beneath this roof did your soul give home to an image more fondly than your mother's? Speak—fear not."

"No, no," the maiden murmured, dropping her eyes to the floor.

"Then I shall come again."

Ah, Alice Woodley, the wand of the mystic magician of Eros has touched thy heart, and the transformation shall abide while life is thine. No power on earth can undo the work thy soul has accomplished now.

CHAPTER V.

THOMAS BRENTFORD started and turned a shade pale when he saw the tears upon Albion's cheeks.

"What is it, Al.?" he asked, starting to the bed and seizing his friend's hand. "You've been weeping. Is it pain?"

"No, no, Tom," returned the youth, raising himself to his elbow. "It is only the thoughts that have been floating through my mind. I tell you I came pretty near my end."

"So you did Al., so you did. But I wouldn't think of it any more. Come—here are your fresh clothes. I'll help you."

Young Tiverton arose, and after he had taken a few steps upon the floor, he was considerably surprised to find his limbs in perfect working order. He felt strong and well, and nothing, save a natural stiffness, seemed to be the result of the calamity of the day before.

"Ah," said Tom, as his eyes rested upon the wine which still remained upon the table, "so you've had a visitor."

"Yes, my lips were fairly parched up, and I rang for drink, and Alice Woodley brought it."

"It's to her you owe your life—did you know it?"

"I was led to judge so, from some words which I coaxed from her," replied Albion.

"Well, so it is, and when we are in the carriage I'll tell you all about it."

Ere long our hero was ready to set out. He had washed and arranged his hair, and in some respects he looked like a new man. Tom called for some one to come and see them off, and soon afterwards Alice came down. All traces of tears were gone from her cheeks, but there was a strange light in her eyes which a close observer might have detected.

"Ah, Miss Woodley," said Brentford, with stiff formality, "you shall be paid for the noble work you have done."

"In Heaven's name, Tom, talk not of pay for such a deed as that," uttered Albion, whispering softly and quickly in his friend's ear. But Tom took no notice.

"You shall be suitably rewarded," he continued, turning to Alice, "for your conduct deserves it. 'Ve must go now, but you shall not be forgotten."

The young man listened till he heard the maiden murmur some simple answer, and then he passed on, and as soon as his back was turned Albion caught Alice by the hand, and passed it to his lips.

"God bless you ever," he whispered. "You have saved my life—it is yours if you will. Adieu till we meet again."

Then the youth turned and followed his friend, but before he went he saw Alice smile a sweet, heavenly smile, and in his soul he knew that she was happy.

Ere long the two friends were seated in the carriage, and the driver had orders to hurry home as fast as possible.

"Upon my soul, Al.," said Tom, shortly after they had started on their way, "you didn't seem to be very thankful to Miss Woolley for the good turn she did you. Why, you hardly so much as thanked her. And then you would even stop *my* thanks."

"Ah, *mon ami*, you don't understand my feelings half so well as I understand them myself," returned Albion, with an assumed laugh. "I could thank a person for saving my dog, or gun, or purse; but it is hard to thank one for saving life, even, too, at mortal risk."

"Well, well, I suppose you feel differently from what I do, though I can't tell how I might feel if I was placed in such a situation."

After this the conversation lagged for a few moments, and then Tom resumed :

"Now, Al.," said he, "I will tell you all about this affair." And thereupon he went on and related the circumstances just about as Alice had related them, save that he did not speak of her soul-struggles while she had held the drowning man by the hair, for he knew nothing of them.

"It is a pity," added young Brentford.

"that we couldn't have some such girls as that in our own sphere of society. I declare I am sick and tired of female society. It is nothing but silly, twaddling, scandal-mongering, meaningless talk from morning till night. Bah! I'm tired of it."

"Don't be an anchorite, Tom. Now, you don't know one half the female world, for even in the upper circles of life there is much real female worth and intelligence. And then among the humbler classes how much of real mental wealth there is."

"I know it, but then we can't associate with such classes, you know."

"Can't associate with them?" repeated Albion, elevating his eyebrows. "Why, what a question. How can't we associate with those below us?"

"I would not associate with those who were really below me."

"I should be my own judge," added Albion, "of what sort of characteristics made the gradations of the social scale. Now, what think you of Alice Woodley?"

"A noble girl, truly," replied Tom; "but not one with whom you or I could associate with propriety. My dogs are noble animals, and they would risk their own lives to save mine or yours, at any time; yet you know their social position. Only we must be more guarded in our deportment toward the human species."

This was spoken with a deal of sober earnestness, and Albion seemed for a few moments to be lost in blank surprise; but he could analyse

his friend's character, and after a while his surprise wore off.

"Tom," said Albion, "I want to ask you one serious question. You know that England is famous for her wealth of mind and science. Now, will you tell me where that wealth all comes from?"

Tom thought a few moments, and at length he said, "It comes from the English people."

"So it does," returned Albion. "And let me tell you that the son of the humble wood-dealer shall outlive the mightiest monarch England eversaw. Shakspeare shall be remembered when Elizabeth Tudor is forgotten. But tell me again. In our upper circles there are many noble minds—many brilliant, educated, virtuous women. Where did they come from?"

Thomas Brentford did not answer.

"Let me tell you," continued Albion. "They came from the PEOPLE. I speak now what I know."

For some moments Tom was silent, but at length he said: "I shall not deny what you have advanced, but it weighs not with me. God has placed me in a particular station of life, and I shall maintain it."

"Stop, stop, Tom. Don't say that God placed you in your social position. 'He hath made of one blood all nations of the earth.' He made you but a helpless infant. Circumstances have done the rest."

"Well, Al., you may have your way—only let me advise you on one subject. If such are your real sentiments—which I do not believe—then don't see Alice Woodley again, for I am

free to confess she is the most perfect female I ever saw. 'Tis a pity she is not of higher birth."

Albion gazed a moment into his companion's face, and then, while a deeper meaning flitted across his handsome features, he said, "Tom, you will pardon me if I ask you one simple question? I have heard your mother was a most noble woman. Now, who was she before your father made her his wife?"

"The daughter of General Lascelle."

"When she was born General Lascelle was a common foot soldier. Is it not so?"

"You are right, Al.; but her father nobly earned his title, and its honour descended to his daughter. She was a noble woman, Albion, and when she died I lost one of the best mothers that ever drew breath."

"I know it, Tom—that is, if I can believe my own parents, for they knew her well. But now I have one more question. Did General Lascelle ever do anything more ennobling than Alice Woodley did yesterday?"

"That is a question, *mon ami*, that I cannot directly answer. You know we must be governed more or less by the circumstances that surround us, and, in our estimate of men and things, **we must take rules as we find them.**"

"We shall say no more on this point at present," said Albion, changing the tone of his voice to one of sudden interest. "Another thing has entered my mind, and it has come to me most strangely since I took my seat in the carriage. It must be that I have seen Alice Woodley before. I know I have. Now, can you tell me where?"

Brentford looked up with a shade of surprise upon his features.

“I am sure I cannot tell.”

“But I know I have,” resumed Albion, with a shake of the head. “I did not think of it while I saw her, but I see it now. How long has she lived here?”

“Let me see. It is nearly five years, I think, since she came to the cottage.”

“Do you know where she came from?”

“She has told some of our folks that she came from Northumberland. I never asked her, for I have never seen her but a few times.”

“Well, I am sure her countenance is familiar —Alice’s, I mean.”

Thomas Brentford gazed into the face of his friend, and a smile dwelt upon his features; but gradually that smile faded away, and, while a change came over his countenance, he said:

“Upon my soul, Al., the same idea now opens upon me. I never thought of it before, though I have met the girl often. She brings fish up to the hal’ once or twice a week regularly. But I can’t think what it means.”

“Can’t you study up anything?”

“Not a thing. But, after all, it may only be a flight of fancy.”

“No, no,” said Albion, who had become strangely impressed with the new idea.

But before he could make any further remark the carriage stopped at the door of Linden Hall

CHAPTER VI.

SIR WILLIAM’s gout troubled him much, but it did not prevent him from rising to his feet to

embrace his young guest ; and the tears that stood in his eyes told how full of real gratitude his heart was. And then, Belinda Warner—she, too, was glad to see the youth safe back again, and she even went so far as to wipe her eyes after she had shaken hands with him.

“ O,” she murmured, with a melancholy look, “ you don’t know how frightened I was. My poor nerves received such a shock—O !”

“ Be comforted, Miss Warner,” returned Albion, with as much gratitude as he could call up, “ for you see I am safe back again. But I am sorry I gave occasion for uneasiness on your part. However, you may rest assured that I shan’t repeat the experiment if I can help it.”

“ It was very kind of the poor fisher-girl to assist you,” said Belinda, “ and I shall make it in my way to thank her personally, for I can feel gratitude, sir—gratitude to even such as she is. I shall personally thank her, for I think she deserves it. I was not allowed the happiness of being the instrument of your salvation. I wish that office had been mine.” And Miss Belinda laid her hand upon her heart, and looked most touchingly upon the young officer.

In a few days young Tiverton was as nimble and well as ever, and he had the satisfaction of seeing the boat he had left upon the Imp’s Rocks got off and made good as new, with but little trouble and expense. And once more he and Tom went in for fun and enjoyment.

One day, while his son and Albion were off hunting, Sir William determined to ride over and see the Widow Woodley. He had not been to her cot since she moved into it, and he had

only seen her at a distance. For nearly five years the widow had paid him a rent of six pounds a year for the cot, but since the event of the rescue of Albion he had resolved to let her have the little place free for the rest of her days.

The old baronet felt very lonesome in his great hall, for Belinda had a touch of the sulks, and she kept her own room. The gouty feet were more easy now, and he resolved to venture out; so he ordered his carriage, and having taken his seat in it, he ordered his coachman to drive around to the little cot on the opposite side of the bay.

In due time the old baronet was set down at the door of the humble dwelling, and for some moments he stopped upon the gravelled walk to admire the quiet beauty of the spot. He could walk now with only the assistance of his cane, and having ordered the coachman to wait for him, he slowly limped up to the door, where he was met by Alice.

Sir William gazed about upon the neatness that everywhere met his view, and then he turned his eyes upon the fair girl who yet remained standing near him.

"Would you like a drop of wine, Sir William?" she asked.

"Yes, Alice, yes." And while the maiden went to bring the wine, the old man watched her with an earnest, admiring gaze.

The wine was brought, and the baronet praised its quality.

"Now, take a seat," he said, after Alice had placed the wine upon a table. "Here—come and sit close by my side."

So Alice sat down by the old man's side, and then he placed his hand upon her arm.

"My sweet child," he said, "do you know what a noble, generous soul you are?"

"Ah, Sir William, do not flatter me," tremblingly uttered the girl, blushing and hanging down her head for a moment, but immediately afterwards looking up into his face.

"I would not flatter, noble one. I would not flatter, for you richly deserve all I say. But where is your mother?"

"She has only gone up the road to meet the stage-coach, for she expects a letter from Newcastle."

Ere long the widow returned. She was a tall, finely-built woman, somewhat bent with age, and bearing still upon her face traces of much beauty. Her hair was white as snow, and her eyes were still bright, and of a rich hazel colour. She started back and trembled when she saw the baronet, but with an effort she overcame the emotion, and then advanced and stood before her guest.

The old man arose to his feet and bowed, and in a few words the widow bade him welcome to her humble abode.

"Madam," said Sir William, after the widow had taken a seat, "I have called over to-day for the purpose of expressing some slight token of my esteem and of my gratitude for the favour we have all received at the hands of your fair child. It is my wish that you shall consider this place as your own for the remainder of your sojourn here on earth. To be sure it is but a mite from my store of wealth, but it will be a home for

you. If you would prefer, you may have a home at the hall."

"At the hall?" uttered the widow, starting. "No, no, Sir William, I would not live there; but most joyfully will I accept your other proposition. Of course I can remain but a short time longer on earth, but my purse is scant, and it feels slight drafts very much. I accept your generous offer, and bless you too."

There were tears in the woman's eyes as she spoke, and her voice trembled considerably. The baronet gazed hard upon her, as though he had just detected something that fastened his attention. He still gazed, and slowly he bent forward. The widow trembled more violently, and her eyes fell to the floor. She soon summoned back her composure, and turning to her daughter, she said:

"Go, Alice, and try your luck at the river. The air is cool now, and you will find it agreeable."

Accordingly, the maiden arose and left the room, and ere long she set off with her basket and line. She had not noticed the strange manner in which her mother spoke, or if she had, she thought 'twas only the presence of a new guest that moved her.

"Woman," said Sir William, after Alice had gone, "who are you?" He spoke in a whisper, and his right hand was half advanced in a nervous attitude.

"My name is Elizabeth Woodley, sir, and I am a poor widow thrown upon the love and care of my child, and upon your bounty for support."

"You are more than that," uttered Sir William, with increased earnestness. "You have been something more. What is it? Tell me of years gone by."

"Sir William Brentford," returned the woman, now more composed, but yet speaking under intense excitement, "I can tell you nothing. If you cherish for us—for my child and myself—the least gratitude, I pray you to show it by letting this matter pass. Ask me no more."

"No, no," he uttered, vehemently, "I cannot give it up. Tell me what I ask, for your very manner betrays you. By Saint Paul, I have seen that face before, and it starts a strange tumult in my soul. What is it? Tell me."

The widow bowed her head, and for some moments she remained thus. The baronet was sure he saw a tear trickle down through her fingers, and he would have started forward, but as he was upon the point of moving, the woman raised her head and gazed upon him.

"William Brentford," she said, "listen to me, and then show me whether you be a man or not. You force me to speak, and I will speak to your own sense of honour. Years ago I was struck down by a blow that broke my heart, and the mantle of shame fell upon me. But I have arisen. My soul is pure, but the world knows nothing of it. I have come to this lone seaside cot to die in peace."

Sir William started from his seat, and he would have sprung forward, but the woman waved him back.

"Woman, I am a man, and I have a man's

feelings—and I have a man's forgetfulness too. Who are you? for the love of heaven, tell me."

The woman returned the man's gaze, and for the instant her eyes flashed; but quickly that sad light came back to them, and while she pointed her finger towards him, she uttered:

"Go ask the man, who in the moment of passion killed his best friend, to tell you of the deed after long years have healed partly the wound. Go ask the mother to tell you of her son's shame, or the wife to confess a husband's guilty crimes; and when you have their answers, then come to me. I can speak no more."

"Why have I never seen you before?" murmured the baronet, half to himself, but with his eyes still upon the widow's face. Then he started up, and said: "I will do as you request, but I may see you again. You will not leave this place?"

"Only for the next world," replied the widow.

The baronet moved on to the door, and then he stopped and looked back again. But he did not speak, though his lips moved. He reached his carriage, and the coachman helped him in, and in a moment more he was on his way home.

Some hours later a servant went up to call Sir William down to dinner—he was in his library, with his head resting upon the edge of the table, and it was not until he had been called the third time that he looked up. His face was then very pale, and his lips trembled.

"I will have my dinner brought here. I am not well," he said.

The servant went down and gave the order, and when Thomas heard it, he went up to find out what was the matter.

"What is it, father?" he asked, as he stood by his father's side. "You are very pale."

"It will soon pass away. I shall be down to supper. Do not be alarmed."

Thomas went down to the dining-hall, and the old baronet was left alone.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN Alice Woodley returned to her home she found her mother upon the bed weeping. She quickly dropped her fish and bent over her, but as soon as the widow found her child present she started up, and brushed the tears from her cheeks.

"What is it, mother?" tenderly inquired the maiden, throwing her arms about her parent's neck.

"Nothing, my child, only I have had a scene recalled to my mind that has made me sad—that's all. I have been thinking of scenes far back of your memory. But I am well now. Let us have dinner."

Alice had seen her mother thus too often to be much surprised, and, without asking any questions, she set about preparing dinner.

After the meal was finished, and the things all cleared away, Alice went out to the small shed and cleaned her fish, and having got this task from her hands, she strayed away to her garden to train up her vines and flowers. She was engaged in this occupation when she heard

a footfall behind her, and on looking round she saw Albion Tiverton. The colour fled from her cheeks, and her limbs trembled with a thrilling emotion.

"I told thee I should come," said the youth, as he advanced and extended his hand. "I have recovered now, and I have come to converse with you. I saw a seat back here a few paces—a seat beneath a cluster of vines. Will you not walk thither with me?"

The maiden did not answer in words, but she turned towards the spot which Albion had mentioned, and accompanied him thither. When they reached it the youth sat down, and then drew the fair girl down by his side.

"Miss Woodley," he said, "I have not come to thank you for the service you have rendered, but I have rather come for addition to my already over-running cause of gratitude. Unless I have entirely misjudged your character, you would have me speak plainly and freely. Is it not so?"

"Most certainly," returned Alice, at the same time folding her hands upon her lap. "I would always know the truth if I know anything, and where the truth may be spoken freely."

"You are right, lady. You speak as I would speak. And yet I trust that my object is not wholly unknown to you. I was born and reared in the lap of luxury, as you probably know, and from infancy up to the present moment all that I could ask has been mine. At an early age my father placed me in the royal navy at my own urgent request, and there I have seen much of life in all its forms and phases. I have

studied character much, and I have seen many springs of action that are concealed in the bosom of society on shore. I have been wild—perhaps very wild; at least so the Admiralty informed my father; but I have never been chastised, and but twice reprimanded. But enough of that. I am growing to be a man, and boyish things I mean to lay off. If I live I wish to be an honoured and respected man—not for the title I may wear, or the estates that may fall to my ownership—but for the goodwill and generosity I may be permitted to extend towards humanity.” Then pressing the small hand he held warmly, he said: “I love you fondly, and if my father’s consent were already ours, what would be your answer?”

“Read it in my heart, which is all—all your own. Read it in my love which would—but you have seen what I can do for one whose face I never saw. For you I would—”

She stopped and pillow'd her face in her lover’s bosom, and burst into tears.

Shortly afterwards the lovers arose, and moved slowly towards the cot. At the door of the humble dwelling they separated; but a vow had been made, and their loves were pledged. Alice watched the noble form of her lover until it was lost amid the distant shrubbery, and then turned into the cot. Her mother sat there, and she looked steadily into the face of her child. The maiden’s face was all covered with a rich, joyous glow, and the parent noticed it.

“My child,” she said, calmly and slowly, but yet with deep meaning, “the young lord of Winchester has been here.”

"Mother," cried Alice, starting quickly to her mother's side, and throwing her arms about her neck. "He has told me that he loved me, and that he would make me his wife."

"Albion Tiverton love such as you?" the mother uttered.

"Ay, I know he does."

"And when would he have you become his wife?"

"He would not make me promise. He would wait until he was free, and then he would ask me for my hand. He would not speak of it again, unless his father would consent, until that time."

"Ah," said the widow, while her features relaxed. "And what was your answer?"

"Plainly that I could never, never be his wife without his father's consent. And Albion did not urge it. O, I do love him, mother, for he is a noble, generous man."

The parent folded her child to her bosom, and while the tears ran down her furrowed cheeks, she said: "You were right, Alice, you were right. I think he is an honourable youth. But—"

She hesitated a moment, and then she drew her child closer to her bosom, and whispered words of counsel.

* * * * *

Whenever Albion could get the opportunity he strayed away to the little cot by the sea-shore, and he had so won upon the widow's affections that she even loved him as a child. Yet Mrs Woodley had seasons of pain and apprehension. And so matters went on at the cot.

At Linden Hall, Albion was cheerful and gay, except when in the presence of Belinda. Sir William was gay in the presence of others, but there were times, when he was alone in his chamber, or in his library that he was sad and melancholy. The first time he walked out any distance, after his gout began to leave him, he strayed away towards that little cot by the sea-shore. He passed through the little back gate that led to the garden, and when he found a seat he rested upon it. He had sat thus some time, when he was aroused by approaching footsteps. He started up, and stood face to face with Albion Tiverton. But the youth was not alone. Alice Woodley leaned upon his arm.

Oh, how proud, how happy, was Alice Woodley at that moment!

Ere long the baronet arose and signified his intention of moving towards home, and Albion arose to follow.

"Sir William," he said, "you know my secret. Have you fault to find, or can you blame me?"

"No, my noble boy, no," fervently uttered the baronet. "I know that woman, but I cannot call to mind who or what she is. But it can matter not to you now. I hope to find out the thing I have lost, and if I do you shall know."

And so the subject was dropped without his having suspected the deep, soul-heaving interest that worked in the old man's soul.

When they reached the hall, the youth sought his own apartment, for he had letters to write, and Sir William repaired to his library. There was one in the hall who had watched

their approach with nervous anxiety, and that was Belinda. There was a spark in her eye, and her thin lips were almost purple. The name of the poor fisher-girl was hissing upon her tongue, and a storm was raging in her soul.

* * * * *

Time wore on, and a month had passed away since Albion Tiverton came to dwell beneath the roof of Sir William Brentford. One bright bracing morning there came a rumble of wheels up from the road, and shortly afterwards the carriage of Lord Tiverton rolled up to the hall. The earl rolled out upon the piazza, and the first to greet him was his son.

It was not long after his lordship's arrival before Sir William sought an opportunity to gently apprise him that there was little probability of the match between his son Albion and Belinda Warner ever being consummated.

He also intimated that the young man appeared to be very much pleased with the company of a lovely fisher-girl who dwelt in the neighbourhood.

Lord Tiverton seemed disposed to let matters drift along smoothly—meanwhile he watched the set of the current.

One evening it happened, while they were assembled in the parlour, that an awful storm arose.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE storm had now reached a fearful power. The vivid lightning played in the heavens, and the loud crashing of the thunder peals reverberated with terrific grandeur.

“God have mercy on any craft that may be caught on our coast without an anchorage to-night!” ejaculated Sir William, as he joined the earl.

“This gale comes from the eastward, doesn’t it?” asked Albion.

“Yes,” replied Tom, “from the northward and eastward. It comes sweeping down the whole breadth of the sea, and it seems as though ’twould wash the whole German Ocean upon our coast.”

“What thunder!” uttered the earl. “Al., my boy, you are better off here than you would be at sea.”

“O, give me plenty of sea-room, and this would be rare sport,” replied the youth. “I’ve stood some tough gales in my time.”

“Ah, there’s a peal of thunder in the distance,” said Sir William, as the sound of a clap more low than the others broke upon their ears.

“That is not thunder!” uttered Albion, as another peal came sounding above the storm. He started forward towards the window as he spoke, and the others followed his example.

“Not thunder!” repeated the baronet.

“No—hark—. There it is again. ’Tis a gun! Death is at our doors! There is a ship on our coast!”

Just then came the fourth report, and as the dull sound rumbled in with the voice of the tempest, Albion Tiverton started towards the door.

“Call up the servants,” he cried, “and let us have lanterns and ropes. We must go down

to the beach. Come, Tom, on with your duds. I have a storm-suit in my chest, and I'll don it in a twinkling. Sir William, you call the servants and light the lanterns."

"But, my son," urged the earl, in a hesitating voice, "you will not expose yourself."

"Father, talk not of exposure now. Ha, hear that gun again! You stay here, there is no need of your exposure to such a storm, but it is part of my profession. Now, then, Tom, look alive."

As Albion thus spoke, he seized a candle from the hand of a servant who had just entered the hall, and hastened to his room. The old earl looked after him as he disappeared, and a light of pride danced in his eyes.

"He is a noble fellow, after all," he uttered.

"So he is," added Sir William, who had called the servants, and returned.

"And he mustn't throw himself away," added the earl.

"No, he musn't," responded the baronet.

"I'll see him—anywhere, before he shall cast himself away on a fisher-girl."

"Yes," suggested Sir William, "what has a fisher-girl to do with loving the son of an earl. She ought to be transported for daring to touch him with her hands. How dared she save him from drowning? It was very low and ill-bred of her to do so."

His lordship looked into Sir William's face with a look of surprise.

"It ought to have been the daughter of some earl, or duke, or some princess," added the baronet; "and then the poor fellow could have

loved her for her nobleness. But, then, honestly, I think she ought to have a few shillings for her labour. But have such a noble youth as that marry with a fisher-girl? Preposterous! No, no—such as he should have a *lady* for a wife. *He* wants more *gold* and more *titles* to make him happy. Fisher-girls? Preposterous!"

At that moment Tom and Albion came in. The face of the latter was flushed with excitement and hurry, but he was yet calm in judgment.

"Now," cried Albion—

"Wait a moment," interrupted the old baronet. "I am going."

"Not by any means," firmly replied Tom.

"Nor shall you, father," said Albion.

The earl raised his head, and asked his son what he had said. In truth, my Lord of Winchester and Tiverton had been thinking of those strange words which the baronet had spoken, and had not noticed what was passing.

Albion repeated his order, but it availed nothing, for in a moment more the two old men put their heads together, and swore they'd go.

But our hero did not wait for them. He saw that his men had ropes, and having assured himself his lantern was so fixed that the wind would not extinguish the light, he set out.

Tom, like Albion, had on an oil-cloth suit, but the others only had on thick woollen garments, and they were wet to the skin in a few minutes, but they thought not of that. The sea broke upon the coast with a roar that set

the thunder at defiance, and the spray was thrown far up over the land.

At length the party reached the shore of the bay, where they could look about them without the intervening of trees. The signal gun was still heard at short intervals, but the roar of the surge was so deafening that its direction could not be made out. Albion had hoped that he should be able to make it out from the light of its flash, but the driving rain, and the thick spray which was thrown high up into the air, shut out its view.

In a few moments the lightning again leaped along the black sky, and the sea was bathed in the lurid glare for miles around.

"There she is!" shouted one of the men, who had perched himself upon a high rock. "I have her berth, and I'll make her out next time."

Albion raised his lantern and jumped upon the rock by the side of the man, and when the next flash came he made out the vessel distinctly. She was a ship—a heavy ship—with a close-reefed maintopsail ~~est~~.

"Merciful heavens!" he cried, "she is drifting upon the Imp's Rocks! See! see! She is almost upon them now!"

At this juncture our hero heard the voice of his father near the rock, and on turning he saw both the old men with each of them a lantern.

"What is it?" cried Sir William.

But before his question could be answered the night-torch of heaven flared out again through the terror-laden space, and the ship was plainly seen. Albion could see where the ~~sea~~

was broken more terribly by the sunken rocks, and he saw, too, that the ship was not half a cable's length from them, and that she was being tossed about like a plaything in the hands of a reckless boy.

Once more the heavens were black as ink, and the lanterns looked like dim sparks just dying amid their own embers, after the blinding light of the electric flame had gone. Albion waited for the death-howl he was sure must come. There was one more boom of the gun, and while its dull voice was yet lingering with the roar of the tempest, there came a sharp wild cry over the water. Albion shuddered, for he knew that the death-angel was at work there!

"The hour has come," he cried to Sir William. "The ship has struck. We will stay, for we may find some who will wash ashore."

Both the old men worked their way upon the rock, and in a few moments more the heavens burned again. The ship was upon the rocks—her mainmast gone, and her hull upon its beam-ends. Albion was sure he saw men clinging to the rigging, and his heart beat with a painful emotion.

"Alas!" he uttered, turning to his father who now stood by his side, "we cannot save them."

"Most assuredly not."

There was another flash—bright and glaring.

"What is that?" cried the earl; and he pointed off to the low beach on the opposite side of the bay.

It was a female form which he had seen, and Albion's quick eye had caught the same.

"That is an angel of mercy," replied the youth, in a subdued tone. "No storm nor tempest will stay her when danger calls, or suffering humanity wants succour."

The old man gazed into his son's face. The glare of the lightning had gone, but he held up his lantern.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"Alice Woodley—the fisher-girl," replied Albion.

The parent made no further remark, but he murmured something over to himself which sounded very much like regret. But that was not the time for such subjects, and Lord Tiverton turned his attention to the ship. Not so Albion, however. When the next flash came his eyes were upon the opposite beach, and he saw that same form standing there yet, right where the surge washed up about her feet, and he could see that in her hand she held a lantern.

"Father," he at length said, "I am going over upon the other beach. If any people are washed ashore, some of them will be as likely to wash up there as here."

"And is that all you would go for, my boy?" the old man asked, holding up his lantern and looking into his son's face.

"No, sir, not by one half. I would go to send that noble girl into her dwelling, and myself take her place on the watch."

"Go, then, but remember you are her friend."

Albion quickly called off three of the men to follow him upon the other side of the bay, and Tom was determined to go too.

"Yes, Master Thomas, you go and keep him company," said the earl, quickly, as though he were anxious that there should be a check upon the actions of his son. "Your father and I will look out for this place. Go—and look out for—"

But Tom heard no more. He saw Albion's lantern clear away ahead, and he hastened on to overtake him. The walk was somewhat of a tedious one, but it was at length accomplished, and Albion found Alice standing watch upon the beach. He spoke to her a few hurried words of love before the others came up, and he chided her for being there; but at his request she consented to retire to the house when she was assured that the place should be watched, and any unfortunate cared for who might chance to come ashore.

The three men who had accompanied Albion and Tom were loud and earnest in their blessings upon the head of the beautiful girl, and Albion felt grateful to them.

After our hero had succeeded in getting Alice beneath the shelter of her cot, he could see that the ship was fast coming to pieces, her masts were all gone, her bulwarks stove off, and her stern broken, and the deck of the poop gone. And yet no human being had come ashore. Not long, however, was he to wait for the shadow of the death-angel. Half an hour had not passed when something was washed up, and Albion found it to be a human body. In fifteen minutes more three other bodies followed it—and that was all. The hours dragged slowly away, and no more dead bodies came. At length the

youth looked at his watch, and it was midnight. For two hours there had been no lightning, and the wind howled coldly and dismally.

"Tom," our hero said, "there will be no more bodies come until the ship is in pieces. It is now past midnight."

"Then let us return to the hall, and in the morning we will come down again. There is no use in remaining here."

"So be it. But one of these men must go and sleep at the widow's cot."

"Yes, Mosely will go. He has often remained there when he has been at work for the widow. Mosely, you will go."

"Certainly," returned the man, who was one of Sir William's foresters—a stout, powerful man, somewhere between forty and fifty years of age.

So Mosely went towards the cot, and Albion and his companions turned towards the road that led up to Linden Hall. When they reached the house they found that Sir William and the earl had already retired, and without further ceremony they threw off their wet clothes, drunk some heated wine, and then followed the example of their elders.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN Albion arose on the following morning he found that the sun was just rising, and that the storm had all passed away. As soon as he could dress himself he hurried away to Tom's room, where he found his friend still fast asleep; but he awoke the sleeper, and in a short time

they were both ready to set out. Albion made his way to the widow's cot at once, and Tom made no objection to this.

The sun was well up when the two young men reached the cot, and they found that Mosley was already upon the beach at work.

Alice was pale and agitated, for not far from her door there was a pile of ghastly corpses, and she had been helping to place them there. But Albion made her retire to the house now, and she complied without resistance. After this our hero joined Mosely.

"I've been up at work here ever since daylight," said Mosely, "and you see I've gathered up all the dead ones I could find. There's more of 'em up the bay, and some on the other side. But I guess the ship had only her common crew aboard, for you see all these be common sailors."

* * * * *

After the meal was eaten the young men again went up into the room where they had left a doctor, and they found him bending over the bed, while the other men were standing by with anxious countenances.

"How is it, doctor?" whispered our hero.

"He's coming to," replied the operator, without looking up.

Albion drew near to the bed and gazed over the head-board, and he saw signs of life plainly working upon an old man's features.

"He is surely coming," said Albion.

"O, yes, he's had his eyes open once, and his lips moved almost with speech. He has had a touch of catalepsis, and most certainly

has been sick some time. There has been fever upon him, and most probably he was just getting up from it when this accident happened."

Albion still stood at the head of the bed, and Tom joined him, and ere long afterwards the old man fairly opened his eyes and turned his head.

"Do you know where you are?" asked the doctor, bending his head low down.

The patient looked up, and a ray of intelligence gleamed upon his face

"I am not dead," he murmured, trembling violently.

"No, not a bit of it. You are safe as need be. Look up and see if you know me."

The invalid gazed anxiously about him for a moment, and then he closed his eyes. Directly he uttered a quick, wild cry, and started up.

"Lost! lost!" he cried. "The ship has—" He stopped and gazed again about him, and then sank back once more upon his pillow.

Now the physician looked carefully into the invalid's face, and then took his pulse, and while he held on by the wrist, he told the poor man that he had been saved. The old fellow made no reply, but seemed trying to remember the scenes he passed through.

"Now, gentlemen," said the man of medicine, turning to Albion and Tom, "we will leave him in the care of a nurse, and I will go down and prepare such medicine as I want him to have. The most he will need for the next twenty-four hours will be rest and quiet. Of course you can supply a nurse?"

"Certainly," said Thomas.

So the party left the apartment, and while the doctor went to prepare his medicine, Tom went to select one of the women to attend to its administration, and after that both the young men went out to meet Sir William and the earl, who were just coming up the road. The baronet was very anxious to hear how the sufferer got along, and he was glad when he heard the result.

"One man saved, at least," he said.

But little did Sir William dream who that sufferer was!

CHAPTER X.

It was on the day after the old man had been rescued from the wreck. All the dead bodies had been taken away by the proper authorities, and men were engaged in clearing away the rubbish of the wreck that had been washed on shore. Alice Woodley had been sitting with her sewing work upon her knees for some time, when her attention was arrested by the approach of a woman who bore a basket upon her arm. The woman was apparently old, and bent with years, and upon her head she wore a black hood that almost entirely concealed her face. She entered the house without knocking, but stopped at the inner door until Alice invited her to come in. She gazed around the room with furtive glances, and then turned her eyes upon Alice.

"My good girl," she said, in a strange, creaking voice, "I am very thirsty."

Alice at once arose and quickly procured

water, which she brought in a pitcher. The woman drank, and then set the pitcher upon the table near her.

"I am a poor, destitute woman," she said, as soon as Alice had taken her seat again, "and I am sorry to say that I am reduced even to begging. For the love of mercy, give me something, if it be no more than a groat."

"We, too, are poor," returned Alice: "but we are not so poor but that we can assist those who are more needy than ourselves."

The maiden arose and went to a little room adjoining, and when she returned she had a half crown in her hand.

"This much you may have with our blessing; and even that may assist you some. If others will only help you according to their means, you need not suffer. Have you called at the hall?"

"O, yes, I called there, and they gave me considerable. And they gave me these plums, too, in the basket here."

Shortly afterwards the woman arose to go, and as she took up her basket, she said: "I cannot carry all these. Do you not love plums?"

"I eat them sometimes," returned the maiden.

"Then get me a dish and I will leave you part of these."

"No, no, my good woman, I do not want them. You may find opportunity to sell them."

"But I can't carry them any further. Were I young like yourself, it would be different, but they bear heavy upon my arm."

Rather than have any further argument, Alice fetched a basin, and the woman poured out some two quarts of her plums. They were the common black damson, and looked quite ripe and nice.

Alice professed to be very grateful for the gift, when the woman thanked her, and then took her leave.

"Ho, mother, do you want some plums?" called Alice.

"Not now, my child. Where did she get her plums?"

"She said at Lindon Hall. I love plums, but I most certainly shall eat none of those."

"And why not?" asked the mother, advancing and looking into the basin.

"Why, if you could have seen her hands you would not ask. I never saw such dirty, filthy hands in all my life. My stomach turns at the very thought. And see, there is dirt upon some of them. Just look at that one—see, it is half covered. It's flour, i-n't it?"

Alice took up one of the plums as she spoke, and showed it to her mother, and while they were examining it the sound of carriage wheels was heard at the door. It was Sir William's carriage which had arrived, but the baronet himself was not there. The doctor, whom we have seen at the hall, was the first to alight, and a companion was with him.

"Doctor Dillon," said Alice, as she extended her hand to one who had been very kind to her mother; and there was a bright smile upon her face.

"I have come, my sweet child, to see how

your mother is," said the doctor, as he passed into the house, "and you see I have brought a friend along with me, but he has only come to see the sights about our coast."

"He is very welcome to our humble cot," the maiden returned, as she set out two chairs, and then, with a smile, she added: "But he will find our coast at a disadvantage now, for we have had a rough visitor."

"We are aware of that, and a severe time it has been. One poor fellow is now at the hall who was rescued from the storm."

"Yes, but many, alas! will know the things of earth no more," she said, softly, while a moist light shone in her eyes. "God receive them!"

There was a moment's pause, and during that time Alice looked up into the face of the doctor's companion, but she found him gazing steadfastly upon her. Little did the fair girl dream that it was the father of her noble lover who now sat there and gazed upon her. But so it was. Lord Tiverton had come over with the physician—just for the scenery, he said—but surely he had come to see for himself the sort of being with whom his son had fallen in love.

"I am a privileged character here, and I shall take the liberty of going to see your mother, for I see she's in her kitchen."

The doctor said this with a smile, and as he spoke he arose and left the room. After he had gone, of course the earl and Alice were left alone, and both of them seemed a little uneasy. Lord Tiverton was struck with something peculiar about the girl's appearance, and so was she

impressed with the same idea respecting him. In fact, there was a striking resemblance between the father and son, though Alice's suspicions were not aroused in that quarter, for the idea of her visitor's true character did not enter her mind.

"You have a delightful residence here," the earl said, after he had viewed the maiden for some time, "but I suppose it has its disadvantages, as have all other places. It is retired, and to some it would be lonesome."

"Yes, sir, but it is not lonesome to us, for in truth we have few friends to leave behind, go where we will; and I believe it is the absence of friends that makes what we call loneliness."

"I think you are right, though a dreary prospect may be lonesome, while a bright and joyous one would not be."

"Certainly, sir. You speak the truth. I should not want to live in a drear and cheerless home, for I should surely be miserable then. But here we have the fields and hills, the streams and the vales, the trees and the flowers, upon one hand, and the great ocean of mystery and grandeur on the other. O, sir, this is a very beautiful home."

It was not the words which the girl spoke that caused the earl to gaze so steadily into her face, but it was the manner in which they were spoken, and the strange, transcendent light that beamed in her countenance. A waking smile was upon her lips, and its soft, sweet tone went even to her eyes.

"After all," said the earl, "it is the spirit of contentment that makes the beauties of any

home. Even heaven itself would be no home without contentment."

"True, sir, very true; and yet sometimes, in view of what we see here on earth, we might be almost led to think that there would be some who would be even discontented in heaven. Too few realize the blessings which are showered upon them. The joys and pleasures of a year pass away and are forgotten, while the misfortunes of an hour are held firmly in remembrance, and made the source of repining and regret."

"You speak advisedly for one so young, my fair child," said Tiverton, becoming more and more interested.

"Do not flatter me, sir, for I have but treasured up a few simple truths that are whispered in the breeze of every changing wind."

CHAPTER XI.

LORD TIVERTON sat back in his chair, and turned his gaze upon Alice. Then he looked once more upon the mother, and he saw that she was much agitated. She noticed his look, and she could not repress the emotions which his presence called up.

"I wish I were sure," he murmured to himself, while he bowed his head.

Dillon smiled, for he did not know how deeply the earl was moved, and he was upon the point of making some light remark, when he detected the plums which lay upon the table.

"Ah," he uttered, "you must excuse me if

I help myself to some of this fruit. I am extremely fond of it."

"You may have as much as you please," returned Alice; "but I should hardly recommend it. I cannot eat it."

"And why not? Is it not ripe?"

"It may be ripe, sir, but not very clean."

"Not clean? Why, the plums look clean enough."

"And perhaps they may be," said Alice, as she arose from her chair and approached the table. "They were left here by an old woman who came begging, and her appearance was filthy in the extreme. You will notice that some of the plums are quite dirty."

As the maiden spoke she picked up one—the one she had examined before—and some of the dirt was still upon it.

In the meantime the doctor had taken up some of the fruit, and was examining it attentively. While he was doing this his countenance changed, and his hand trembled.

"What is it?" asked the earl, who had been watching him.

Dillon opened the plum, and the substance which Alice had thought looked like dirty flour was found to have been jammed down into the fruit.

"You must take these plums in the basin, and bury them. Bury them so deep that nothing can dig them up. These which I have picked out here I shall keep."

"But what is it, doctor?" asked the widow, with nervous anxiety.

"I'll tell you," replied Dillon, slowly and

emphatically. "These plums have just about half of them been poisoned!"

The mother and child both started to their feet, and moved towards the table, but the mother was the most pale and excited. She trembled violently, and her lips were like chalk.

"This is a most strange affair, and one which should be looked into. And it shall be looked after, too," added Tiverton. "This old woman may be a villain."

The widow moved close to the earl's side and laid her hand upon his arm, and while she looked earnestly into his face she uttered in a low, hoarse whisper:

"You do not think Sir William would have—"

"Would have what?" asked the earl, starting to his feet.

"No, no," the poor woman uttered, "he would not—I know he would not."

"Ah, I see now," said Lord Tiverton, in slow, marked tones. "You are—"

"Arnot Tiverton, speak not a word. You have sought my roof, and I opened my doors. When you go forth let your lips be sealed. I am but what I seem—a poor degraded—no! a poor *honest* woman. Now, let it pass."

The widow had spoken very slowly, and with a strange emphasis. The earl sat back in his chair, and as his eyes wandered to where Alice sat, he saw that she was pale and trembling. When she heard her mother pronounce that name, she knew that she had been conversing with the proud father of her lover.

The doctor gazed upon the scene in blank surprise, but he caught the eye of the earl, and he read there a sign for him to keep silent.

“Lady,” said Tiverton, looking steadily into the widow’s face, “there is surely harm meditated here in this poisoned fruit, but I trust you will not so deeply wrong a noble and generous man as to entertain for an instant the idea which you came nigh whispering to me. I do not think that poison was meant for you.”

“Then it was meant for my child,” said Mrs Woodley.

“I think it was—that is, if it was meant fatally for either. But I will look after it. Miss Woodley, will you give me a description of the woman who left these plums?”

“Yes, sir, as near as I can,” returned Alice, looking up, and speaking in a tremulous voice. “She appeared to be quite old, if I might judge from her form and carriage. Her dress was of faded, dirty black silk, and on her head she wore a black hood. Her hair was of a yellowish cast. I could tell but little of her features, for she kept her face turned away as much as possible.”

“I may come across her; and if I do she will most assuredly hear from me. Come, doctor.”

The earl arose as he spoke.

“My good woman,” he said, “I am not here to pry into your secrets, and I have discovered nothing that is worth the telling. You have nothing to fear.”

As he thus spoke he turned from the apartment and passed out into the front garden. The

doctor followed his companion out to the carriage, and soon they drove off.

The mother and child were once more alone. Alice went and sat down by her parent's side, and looked earnestly up into her face.

"Mother," she said, "will you not tell me what all this means?"

"Let this matter rest for the present where it is. Sometime, perhaps, I may tell you all; but not now. Go, now, and destroy that fatal fruit."

The maiden started at the mention of the fruit, and her face turned pale again.

"Oh," she uttered, "it cannot be possible that this bitter cup was meant for me—or for you. Who lives that could wish us harm?"

"I know not, my child," returned the mother, with a sad shake of the head. "It may be some mistake. I hope it is. But go now and bury them, and we will talk of that afterwards."

* * * * *

Doctor Dillon and the earl were riding on towards the hall, and for a long distance they had ridden in silence.

"My lord," said the doctor at length, "you seemed to recognise the widow."

"Well—let that pass; but what can you think of those poisoned plums? You are sure they were poisoned?"

"Sure?" reiterated Dillon. "Why, the first plum I examined contained nearly two grains of pure strychnia, and less than a grain will destroy life. Once I tried its power upon a rabbit, and half a grain, blown into its head

through a pipe stem caused death in four minutes and a half. You can judge for yourself."

"Then it must have been meant murderously," said the earl.

"It is a severe thing," said the doctor, shaking his head impressively, "and it should be sifted to the bottom. The woman was surely at the hall this morning, and we may find out something concerning her from some of the servants."

Lord Tiverton had his suspicions, though they were very vague and undefined.

CHAPTER XII.

THE old man who had been saved from the wreck was now quite comfortable, though very weak. According to his accounts he had had a severe fever in London, and as soon as he had been able to venture out he had secured a passage for Newcastle in the ship "Fintona." He stated that the ship was off the Naze when the storm first came on, and that the captain stood off hoping that it would not last long. But at length he was obliged to heave-to with a lee-shore at hand, and from that moment all government over the ship was lost.

There was considerable intelligence in the man's eyes, and his language was well chosen, and spoken with clear pronunciation. He would not tell his business, his name, nor anything else by which any idea could be gained of his character or habits. It was towards evening

and the weak man had been bolstered up to a sitting posture; and thus he sat when Sir William Brentford entered the room.

“We saved your life from drowning, and we want to finish the work now we’ve begun it. You will find a home here as long as you need it, and good nursing, too.”

“But I cannot repay you, sir.”

“Will you have the kindness to wait until we ask you for pay? I would have you understand that Sir William Brentford doesn’t take pay for doing deeds of kindness.”

The old man upon the bed started at the name of the baronet, but Sir William thought ‘twas only a twinge of pain, and he paid it no attention.

“You belong to London, I presume?”

“Well—as much there as anywhere.”

“We should like to know how to address you.”

“Well, then, you may call me Brown.”

Sir William was a little moved by his manner of answering. After awhile he resumed:

“The doctor informs me that you will soon be well again if you have proper care.”

At that moment the sun, which had been behind the top of a thick tree, threw its beams into the room, and they fell upon the invalid’s face. The profile was relieved most strikingly, and as the baronet saw it he started forward and leaned over the bed. The sick man quickly turned his face away from the sun, but in doing so he presented it more fully to his host.

“By my soul, I have seen that face be-

fore," Sir William uttered, with much earnestness.

The man started and covered up his face with the bed clothes, but the baronet tore them off.

"Look ye, *Sir Harold Radston*, I know you!"

"Then let it go so."

The baronet sat back in his chair and clenched his hands together. His face had turned pale, and his teeth were set firmly together. He gazed upon that man before him, and his eyes burned almost like coals.

"Harold Radston," he said, in a low, grinding tone, "I would save the life of the dirtiest dog in the world if it lay in my power, but had I known you, you should never have passed my threshold, even though you had died at my own door like a worm."

"Ah, Sir William, as we grow old we should grow forgiving."

"Oh, I should like to see the angel that could forgive such as you!"

"You are that angel, Sir William," spoke the sick man.

"Me!" uttered the baronet, starting up again and clenching his fists. "Oh, I call on God to witness. When I forgive you for the past—may my—"

"Stop, stop, Sir William Brentford. Beware how you speak!"

"Well," he said, after some apparent consideration, "let it pass. We're both old now, and death will soon come to settle up our earthly accounts. You know best how you can meet the back spirit."

"Well enough, Sir William. I can meet him as well as I have met other spirits that come occasionally to visit me. Don't you sometimes have spirits come to visit you, that make you melancholy like—that make you almost feel as though death would be a—"

"Harold Radston, stop! I would hear no more. I shall leave you now, and I hope I shall see you no more. Yet the doctor shall visit you, and you shall have kind nursing. I hope you will not speak your name to any other soul within this dwelling."

"I have not spoken it yet."

"O, Sir Harold, you have been a sore thing in my soul. I bid you farewell, and I hope, if we do meet again, that we shall both be happier."

Sir William turned towards the door as he spoke, and passed out from the room. He sought his study, and when once there he sank down into a chair and buried his face in his hands. He was deeply moved, and for a long while he sat there and murmured over incoherent sentences himself. He had been thus some half-hour or more, when he was aroused by the opening of his door, and on looking up he beheld the earl.

"How now, Sir William? at your sulks again?"

"No—only thinking, Tiverton; that's all."

"Have you any poison in the house, Sir William?"

"Yes, strychnia, I think. I got it to poison foxes and other vermin that troubled my poultry."

The earl started slightly, but he did not exhibit any unusual emotion.

"Then I should like to know whom you trust it to?"

"Why, if I remember rightly, I got Belinda to take that. But what's the matter?"

"Only a twinge in my side. I am subject to them. But, by the way, good Sir William," uttered the earl, as though a new idea had suddenly come to his mind, "did you see anything of an old woman about here this morning?"

"What kind of an old woman?"

"An old woman with a faded black silk dress, and a black hood, and flaxen hair, and somewhat bent."

"No, not now. We used to have an old woman here something like that. Ha, ha, ha—she was a jolly old thing. But she's dead—and been dead these ten years, so it couldn't have been her, even if there was such a one seen."

"I think there was such a one seen," said the earl, "about here this morning. She had some plums which she said were given her here."

"Seems to me you are very eager all at once to save my fruit."

"I am, Sir William, and when I have found the thief I will tell you why." The earl had found some light on the subject of his search.

"But you ain't going to use poison?"

"No—sir. But wait until I find the thief, and then you shall know."

The baronet said no more, for he had confidence enough in the earl to feel sure that

nothing would be done out of the way, and also, that whatever was done, would be done for the best.

CHAPTER XIII.

ALBION TIVERTON had been sent for to attend his father, and without hesitation he answered the summons. At length the earl laid his pen aside, and leaned back in his chair.

"My son," he said, while a proud light beamed in his clear, bright eye, "I have good news for you."

Albion leaned forward, but did not speak.

"I think the history of our navy records but few instances of one so young as yourself receiving such honour. I have received from the Admiralty your commission."

"*Commission?*" uttered the youth, starting up. "*My commission?*"

"Yes my son. You are a lieutenant in the Royal Navy."

For some time there was silence in the apartment, and gradually the thoughts of both father and son seemed to wander off upon another subject. Albion was the first to break the spell, and when he spoke it was in a hushed, eager voice:

"Father, you spoke to me of Belinda Warner."

"You need not mention the girl's name to me again. I was blind when I conceived the idea. Belinda Warner is not the woman for your wife, nor yet for any man."

Albion felt much relieved for the moment, but soon there came a cloud over his soul, and he trembled. But he was resolved to speak now, and he turned towards his father with the fixed purpose of knowing the fate that was in store for him, for he had made up his mind since he had entered that room that he would take no important step in life without his father's full and free consent.

"Father," he said, in a tremulous tone, "you remember that on the night when you spoke to me of Belinda Warner, there was also another name mentioned?"

"I remember," returned the earl, speaking coolly and thoughtfully.

"It was of a poor fisher girl," resumed the youth, nervously.

"Yes, of Alice Woodley."

"Yes. And I wanted you to see her."

"I have seen her."

"You have?" uttered Albion in astonishment.

"Yes, yes, Albion. Alice Woodley is a remarkable girl. I do not know that I ever met with one more perfectly beautiful, or less endowed with objectionable qualities."

"Then, ~~may~~ I not make her my wife? I have resolved that I will not take an important step in life without your full and free consent, though if Alice Woodley be torn from me I shall never marry another."

"O, Albion," the earl said, while he shook his head reprovingly, "you must not express yourself too decidedly. You are yet young."

"I know I am young, but yet I can judge

deeply of those feelings that have entered into my soul. No other person can ever find that place in my heart which she has taken up. Were I to give my hand to another while she lived, I should give it without love, and were I to pledge a husband's love before the holy altar I should but perjure myself before God. I speak now the deep convictions of my soul."

The earl gazed for some moments upon his son without speaking. His countenance underwent a variety of changes, and it could be plainly seen that he was deeply embarrassed. At length he said—"I cannot give my consent to your union with that girl, Albion."

"Then," said Albion, in a tone which showed how poignant was the sting he felt, "my fate is fixed. I will not break my self-made promise. In me the house of Tiverton and Winchester must end, for I shall never—"

"Stop, my boy, you know not what you say."

"Ah, father. I know too well," the youth said, shaking his head sadly. "You have spoken that which shuts my heart up for ever!"

"You forget your age, Albion. A few years of excitement in your noble profession will wipe this all out, and then you will thank me for what I have done."

"Say no more, sir," uttered the young man, rising to his feet. "Farewell, father—"

"Stop, Albion."

The young man stopped, and looked into his father's face.

"Albion," he continued, after gazing a few

moments into his son's face, "I did not say that I would *never* give my consent."

"How?" uttered the youth, starting forward.

"I did not say that I would never give my consent to your union with Alice Woodley. But I cannot give it now. Do not ask me why at present. Perhaps—mind—I say, *perhaps*—at some future time I may give my full and free consent; and if I do I will take Alice Woodley to my bosom and love her as a child. I hope you will place confidence enough in me to trust me without asking further questions."

"O, most joyfully, father. You will consent. I know you will."

At that moment there was a movement near the door, and from sudden impulses Albion started up and opened it. He looked into the corridor, and he saw the skirt of a female dress just disappearing around the angle of the passage.

"What is it?" asked his father, as he returned to the room.

"It was Miss Warner's dress."

"Miss Warner had better be thinking of the future," said the earl, and as he spoke he resumed his writing. His hand trembled slightly, as though something of startling moment was upon his mind. Albion noticed it, and he thought his father was only vexed because the girl had been listening to their conversation.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHEN Lord Tiverton came out from his room

he inquired for Belinda Warner, but she was not to be found. One of the servants informed him that she had gone down the road some half hour before, and turned into the cross path to Aldborough ; and soon afterwards he found Miss Warner's maid, and she informed him that her mistress had gone to see an old-woman who lay sick a few miles distant. The earl shook his head when he heard this, and then went to seek Sir William, while Albion rejoined Tom, and took his gun for a hunting excursion.

It was on the following day that Alice Woodley sat in her sitting room sewing. She had been very sad and thoughtful of late, for she had much to make her so :—the visit of Lord Tiverton—the strange conduct of her mother, and her subsequent melancholy—and the startling event of the poisoned plums.

It was towards the middle of the afternoon, and Alice had sat there by the window since dinner. She was just leaning back from her work, and thinking of taking a run into her garden, when she heard footsteps without, and on turning her head she saw a man approaching the house. He was a stout, powerful fellow, habited in the rough garb of a sailor, and when he reached the door he stood and knocked loudly.

“ Be there a Widow Woodley lives here ? ” he asked, as Alice made her appearance.

“ Yes, sir.”

“ I must see her.”

Alice called her mother, and in the meantime she invited the man to walk in ; but he said he

could not stop, as he was obliged to keep on towards Dunwich. Soon the widow appeared.

“This be Mrs Woodley?”

“It is, sir.”

“Do you know the folks 'at live in the 'ouse beyant the hill on the Saxmundham road?”

“Yes.”

“Well, the old 'ooman what lives there be almost dyin', and they want ye to come right over, and I told 'em as I were coomin' by here I'd tell ye. So good-by to ye.”

The man, having thus delivered his errand, turned from the door, and kept on his way. The widow was not a woman to shut her ears to the call of the needy. She knew the honest people to whom the man had alluded, and without hesitation she prepared herself to visit them, promising her child that she would return before dark. Alice felt some strange misgivings when she saw her mother turn away from the cot, but she would not call her back. She tried rather to quell her uneasiness, and make herself cheerful. She did not go out into the garden as she had intended, but as soon as her mother was out of sight she returned to her window and sat down. She had hardly resumed her sewing when she heard footsteps again, and on looking out she saw the same man, who had just called, returning, and another accompanied him.

“Look here, miss,” he said, entering the house without ceremony, “your little self is wanted too.”

“Me—wanted?” uttered Alice, starting to

her feet. She was frightened, for the men, both of them, looked reckless and bad.

"Are you goin' to move?" cried the man, roughly. "'Cause if yer ain't we'll just help you. B'aint this yer hood and shawl, eh?"

"Yes—but I cannot leave the house now."

"Can't, eh? By the top of the skies you must. So coom along. An' don't yer cry, neither, 'cause, if yer do you'll just get your mouth stopped. D'ye understand?"

Alice sank down upon her knees and clasped her hands, but the ruffians took no notice of her entreaties. They roughly lifted her to her feet, and started towards the door. When they had reached the little front garden she started from them, and ran with all her might, but she could not run far. She was soon overtaken, and when she cried out in her agony they tied a dirty handkerchief tightly over her mouth, and then hurried her away up the beach. At length Alice saw a large boat moored close into the shore. It must have been of some forty tons burden. When the men reached the place where the boat was fast, one of them lifted Alice in his arms and waded out and put her on board, while the other cast off the bow fast, and then waded out himself. The heavy sails were soon set, and ere long the lugger was shooting swiftly out to sea.

Now the bandage was taken from the girl's mouth, and she was advised to put on the shawl and hood. The wind was from the westward, and as soon as the boat was well out, her head was hauled to the southward.

"Now, miss, you may go into the cuddy if

you want to," said the man whom she had first seen, at the same time pointing to a door forward which opened into quite a large berth.

"Not now, not now," uttered the poor girl. "First tell me what this means? Tell me where you are carrying me?"

"We don't know noth'n'," answered the first villain, who held the tiller. "So you needn't ask no questions, for you won't get no answers. If you ken understand plain English I should think you might understand that, now."

Alice looked up into the man's face, and she saw by the cold hardness that dwelt there that she had nothing to hope from him. At that moment she cast her eyes upon the shore, and found herself just opposite her little cot. She could see the door open as it had been left when they dragged her out, and she could see the rose bushes and creeping honeysuckles that grew about her window; then she thought of her poor mother, and she wondered how the stricken parent would feel when she returned and found the cot deserted.

"Don't you find it cold, miss?" asked the man at the helm.

Alice raised her face from beneath her shawl, and gazed up.

"O, sir, if you have mercy carry me back to my home—carry me back to my mother. For the love of God have compassion on me. Tell me—O, tell me—how I have ever wronged you or done harm against you."

"It's no use, miss, for I won't speak one word, so there's an end on't. Don't ye understand?"

Alice did understand very well, and once more she hid her face beneath the folds of her shawl. The sun was fast sinking towards the distant hills, and the air was becoming cool. The boat had now run off to the southward and eastward until the land was dim in the distance, and ever and anon as Alice would turn her eyes towards the helmsman as though to speak, she remembered his vow, and remained silent.

* * * *

Alice had no means of knowing how many hours had passed away, but she knew that the breeze was yet fresh and fair; and she knew enough of maritime affairs, also, to know that the lugger was going very fast through the water, for from the heeling of the craft she knew that the wind was yet upon the beam. Ten miles, at least, were run off every hour, and at this rate she knew that she must be far beyond the mouth of the Thames! And yet she knew by the motion of the vessel that she was far at sea, and that she was yet being borne farther from her home!

CHAPTER XV.

BELINDA WARNER was gone from the hall all night, and when she returned she hastened at once to her own room, and thither Lord Tiverton followed her. She was pale and agitated when she saw him, and would have got rid of his presence could she have done so.

“I wish to see you but a few moments,” the earl said, as he took a seat near her. “You of course remember that I once spoke to you about becoming the wife of my son?”

"Assuredly I do, sir," returned Belinda, in a tone and manner which plainly showed that she was sustained thus firmly by wilful anger.

"But would you accept the hand of a man without his love?"

"I would be Albion Tiverton's wife, sir. And mark me, my lord; I should never have sought this of my own accord. You broached the subject to me, and of your own purpose, without the least advance or intimation on my part, you assured me I should be his wife. Perhaps you remember, sir," she added, with keen sarcasm, "that you said he should marry me whether he wished it or not?"

"I remember," said the earl, looking with surprise upon the girl before him, for he had thought she would be dumb in his presence.

"Ay, you did not foresee that your son would fall in love with the poor fisher-girl, I suppose?"

"Of course I did not," returned the earl, not at all moved by the girl's irony, but yet startled at her perfect *sang froid*. "Nor," he continued, looking at her keenly in the eye, "did I foresee that this poor fish-girl would risk her own life to save that of my son."

"Ah, you did not!"

"Belinda Warner," said Lord Tiverton, in a low, meaning tone, "Sir William told me if I wanted any strychnia, I should find it in *your* keeping."

"Strychnia!" uttered the girl, starting.

"Yes. It is a virulent, fatal poison. Have you any?"

"No, no. I know nothing of it."

"Then perhaps it was stolen from you by the same person who stole the baronet's plums!"

The girl started again, and turned pale as death.

"Why—why—should—I—know of—"

Thus far the girl spoke in convulsive, incoherent tones, but she could get no further, for her throat was choked, and she trembled like a reed.

"Belinda Warner," uttered the earl, starting from his chair, and laying his hand suddenly upon the girl's arm, "tell me what you know of this? Tell me where is the strychnia which Sir William gave you to keep!" He spoke deeply, terribly.

"O, mercy! I know not! I am not—not—"

She faltered, and clasped her hands upon her bosom, and her face was ashy pale.

"It is all false—false as Satan! I never did it—and you cannot prove it. If you say that I did it you will lie! If you tell others that I did this—"

"I shall tell nothing at present," interrupted the earl, removing the girl's hands from his arms with a strong effort.

Tiverton pushed the girl away as he spoke, and then passed out of the room. He knew he was much agitated, and he went directly to his own apartment. Ere long, however, he overcame his deep emotion, and when he met Sir William he was as free and sociable as ever.

On the following day, while the earl was walking alone in the garden, his son ap-

proached him in a state of the most intense agony and excitement. The parent was startled, and in quick, anxious tones he inquired what had happened.

“I went this forenoon—only a short time since—to the widow’s cot, and I found Alice gone!” uttered the youth, in tones of anguish.

“Gone?” reiterated the earl. He was anxious, for he had conceived a strange interest for Alice Woodley.

“Yes,” resumed Albion. “I found the poor mother overwhelmed with grief, and she told me all that had happened, and she wondered if you had had a hand in it.”

The youth trembled violently while he spoke, and the changes of his countenance showed how poignant was his anguish. The earl, too, was deeply moved, and for a while he gazed into his son’s face in silence.

“What does it mean, father?”

“It means that some one is determined to have Alice Woodley out of the way.”

“But who can it be?”

“Albion, can I trust you with a secret?”

“You know you can.”

“But you must not show by look or word that your suspicions are aroused.”

“Upon my soul I will not,” said the youth, looking anxiously into his father’s face.

“Then Belinda Warner has some designs upon Alice I am sure of it, and you can judge the cause well as I.”

He forward and laid his hand
 arm. He remembered
 at the door to overhear

his father and himself converse, and he remembered, too, what he had seen of her character and disposition.

"Is it possible?" he uttered, gazing half-wildly into his father's face.

"Do not show that you suspect this."

"I will not—by my soul I will not."

"Then," said the earl, speaking calmly and distinctly, for in cases of emergency his mind was quick and clear; "do you prepare at once and go towards Aldborough, and find out where Belinda Warner went to there, and what she did—learn all that you possibly can, and spare not gold if thereby you can unlock anybody's tongue. She was there day before yesterday. While you are gone, I will look out for things here. You may trust Tom, if you please, and take him along with you. Hasten now, and Alice Woodley shall be found, though it cost me half of all my possessions."

What a gleam of joyful gratitude danced in the youth's eyes at this last remark! But it quickly passed away, and anxious fear assumed its place. In half an hour more, both Altion and Tom were on the road to Aldborough.

The earl pondered a long while upon what had happened, and he resolved that he would not at present say anything to Belinda about it, for he knew that she would not hesitate to lie; but he was determined that she should not leave the hall until matters were cleared up, and to this end he called into requisition the services of his two grooms. These were men who had been in his service for many years,

and he knew that he could trust them implicitly. He bade them keep an eye on Miss Warner's movements, and if she attempted to leave the place to detain her—by force if necessary.

Lord Tiverton visited the widow, and he found her frantic with grief and agony, but a change came over her countenance when the earl expressed his sympathy for her, and when he sat down and promised to exert himself to the utmost to find Alice and bring her back, the poor woman felt more joy than can be expressed. To be sure it was not the joy of perfect peace, but of gratitude and relief. When this was understood, the earl drew his chair nearer to the widow, and in a low, frank, earnest tone, he opened a new subject. Mrs Woodley started and turned pale, but the noble earl spoke on, and gradually the poor woman grew more composed, and listened attentively. In time her own tongue was unlocked, and she spoke thoughts that had been locked up within her own soul for years. The earl laid his hand upon her arm, and he told her that he believed all she said—that he had perfect confidence in her, and that he would do all in his power to make her last days light and peaceful, and to lift the veil from her evening of life, so that the stars of promise and hope might shine upon her.

The woman listened as listens the prisoner to the sentence that sets him free from death, and when the last word fell upon her ears she bowed her head and wept till the tears ran in big drops down her furrowed, time-worn

cheeks. They were tears of gratitude, deep and heartfelt, and her soul was filled with earnest, hopeful prayer.

CHAPTER XVI.

ALICE did sleep again at length, and she did not dream as before.

When she was next aroused it was by hearing her captors conversing in a loud tone, and she thought, when she looked out, that the first gray streaks of dawn were breaking upon the sky. She knew that the course of the lugger was now changed, and from the motion she felt she judged that the shore was close at hand.

Next she was taken up in the strong man's arms and carried out, and in a moment more she felt some one grasp her from above and lift her up, and when she was set down again she stood upon the solid ground.

"Now, miss," said one of the ruffians, "you may walk with us, for I s'pose you'd rather walk than be carried."

Alice made no resistance, for both her arms were held, and as they started on she followed their example.

Soon her conductors stopped and left her, and then she heard their footsteps as they departed, and shortly afterwards the grating of bolts fell upon her ear. Her hands were at liberty, and as soon as she was satisfied that she was alone she removed the bandages from her mouth and eyes.

It was daylight now, and Alice found herself

in a small room, the windows of which—two of them—were grated, and the furniture of which consisted only of a rough table and two pine benches.

The floor was of tiles, and the walls were of soft sandstone, arched overhead. She went to the window and looked out, and for some moments she thought only of things that were far distant, but at length she began to examine the scenery about her.

She stood there by the window when her door was opened, and on turning she saw an old woman. She turned quickly from the window and approached the new comer.

She was evidently French. She supplied Alice with food, and told her in tolerable English that she would have everything she desired except liberty. Then she left Alice to her solitary reflections.

After brooding for some time over her misfortunes, Alice bestirred herself to action. She looked out of her window, which opened upon the street of a town. She opened a table drawer, hoping to find some clue to her actual whereabouts. In the drawer she discovered paper and writing materials.

The paper was quickly laid upon the table, and the ink and pens taken out. Then she drew out one of the benches, and having selected the best of the three pens she set about writing. Her hand trembled, but not so but that she could write rapidly and legibly. She addressed Sir William Brentford, and explained all that happened to her, stating that she was two miles to the westward of Dunkirk, near the

shore, and also described the location as well as she could from the view she had taken from the window. She wrote that she might only be kept there a few days, and for the love of God she urged him to send for her, and also to inform Albion Tiverton of the circumstances. Having written all that was necessary, she folded the letter up and neatly superscribed it. She had no wafer, but upon the wooden bench, which was of pine, she found several hard globules of pitch, and with one of these she sealed the letter securely.

But the work was not yet done. The letter was written, but not sent. The probability of finding any one in the house who would mail it for her was dubious, to say the least. But the work must be done quickly, if done at all, and she resolved to trust to fate. So she took another sheet of paper, and upon it she wrote as follows:—

“Whoever you be that finds this, I beseech of you to place the within letter in the post-office at Dunkirk or Calais as quickly as possible, and for you I will ever pray. Do this, and you will serve one who needs your aid. Within you will find the money to pay the postage to England.”

Alice wrote this in both English and French; her mother had taught her French—and then folded the sealed letter up in it, also enclosing a shilling piece which she fortunately had with her. With a string which she had found in the fire-place she tied the whole up, and then upon the outside she wrote—“*Open it.*” Then she placed the pen, ink, and paper back in the

drawer, and put the precious packet in her bosom. The day wore slowly away, and as soon as it was fairly dark she went to the window and raised the sash, and threw the package out into the street where she had seen many people pass and repass during the day.

Fortunately for Alice, her letter fell into honest hands. It was immediately deposited in the town post office, and, by due course of mail, reached Sir William. A consultation was held.

The result was that Albion and Thomas immediately secured a fast-sailing vessel; manned her with resolute volunteers, and quickly sailed for the harbour of Dunkirk.

They arrived just at the nick of time, for as they were walking up one of the streets on the evening of their arrival, they encountered two men, partly leading, partly carrying, a young woman between them. A glance sufficed. The exclamation "Albion!" from the lips of the female, in a trice brought Albion and his crew to her side. Her captors fled at the sight of the odds against them, and were not pursued, as the young men were too eager to get Alice fairly back to England.

Great, as may easily be imagined, was the joy in Linden Hall when Alice was safely beneath its venerable roof-tree.

CHAPTER XVII.

It was evening, and the great drawing-room of Linden Hall was lighted up as though for a

party. Alice Woodley had returned, and the kind old baronet had resolved that the happiness of the re-union of mother and child should transpire beneath his own roof.

Again Sir William gazed upon the mother and child, and the cloud came over his brow, and a tremulousness shook his whole frame.

"Mother," said Alice, loud enough to be heard by all present, "do you realize how much we owe to Sir William? O, he has been very kind. But what is the matter?"

"I am not well, Alice," the widow replied, as she laid her trembling hand upon her child's arm. "Let us go to our own humble home. I shall be better there."

Before the earl could speak, they were startled by an exclamation from Tom, and on looking down the room they saw a ghostly figure approaching them. It was the *old man of the wreck*! About his tall form was drawn a white shroud, and his face—still covered with bristling beard—looked almost frightful in its death-like ghastly hue and features. Alice uttered a cry of terror, and crouched nearer to her mother, for she was startled; but she soon had another protector. Albion saw her emotion, and he sprang to her side and bade her not be afraid.

"Now, Harold Radston, what means this?" cried the baronet, as soon as he could recover from his first startling emotions. "Why have ye come from your death-bed to freeze us with your presence?"

"William Brentford," he said, in a deep, hollow voice, "I told you not long since that

ere I died you should forgive me for the past. To-night I heard—my nurse told me—that these people were here, and I have come to see them. This mother and child I have seen before."

"So have I," whispered Sir William, convulsively.

"William Brentford," he said, "do you remember when we were both young? when we both started in life to run the race of living?"

"Yes," returned the baronet, tremblingly.

"And you remember, too, that I loved a fair maiden, and wooed her—and that you whispered words of warning in her ear till she turned away from me. You remember?"

"Yes, yes," uttered the baronet. "But you know, Harold Radston, that I told her the truth. You were a riotous spendthrift, and a libertine. You cannot deny it."

"Perhaps I was, but I loved that fair girl, and when you poisoned her against me—"

"I did not poison her, Harold, but I told her the truth. I did it alone for her own good."

"And yet you wooed and won her," said the other, with a tone of deepest irony.

"So I did, but I thought not of it then. It was while trying to save her from you that I first thought of loving her. As God is my judge, and as unto Him I must render an account of life, I did not warn her selfishly, for it was not till afterwards that I loved her."

"William Brentford, hear me through. I say I planned a most sweet revenge. I resolved that you should think your wife un-

faithful. I visited her in your absence—I went often to your home, and I hired men to watch me go and come. They did not know that the sweet lady of whom they spoke was true as an angel—ay, as true as Heaven itself, to her husband ; but they believed she was false ! ”

“ Harold Radston, you lie now ! ” gasped the baronet.

“ As I live, and as I must die and render an account to God of my last act of life, I say she was true to you as Heaven.”

“ Mercy ! ” groaned the baronet, as though his heart were fully broke. “ And she died innocent ! ”

“ *Died ! Sir William ?* ” uttered the sick man, looking up in astonishment. “ Died did you say ? ”

“ Yes—away off in Scotland ”

“ Ha, ha—you have never yet found—But I am astonished. Your wife did *not* die. She sent word to you that she was dead—or, rather she hired others to do so—that she might not see you again. You had turned her from your doors, and when she went away on that cheerless morning she bore your own infant in her arms. O, Sir William, I was close at hand, and saw her go, and I knew that you were driving an angel from your door, and that the cherub she bore was of your own flesh and blood. My revenge was complete then ! ”

A moment the old man of the wreck gazed upon the stricken baronet, and then he said, in a deep, calm tone :

“ William, my hour of enmity has passed. My revenge has been fearful, but 'tis past now.

Your wife lives—and your own sweet child lives, too. O, Sir William, you must have been blind. That woman who sits trembling there—she who has lived for five years within sight of your door—she who has seen you oft, and wept when you knew it not—she came back here to die amid the scenes of her youth—amid the flowers of life that were faded—*She is your wife!*—as pure and free from stain as when first you led her blushing to the holy altar. Now—now, Sir William forgive me."

The baronet started up from his chair, and gazed full into the speaker's face.

He looked upon the woman. He placed his trembling hand upon her bowed head.

"ELIZABETH!" he whispered, faintly.

But she spoke not. She only bowed her head and sobbed.

"ELIZABETH," he said, "come to me, and bless and forgive me. O, I have deeply wronged you—but God knows how foully I was deceived. Come—this heart is all your own, and it has been for years. Come—forget and forgive the past, and let joy be ours. Come, Elizabeth, my own, my wronged, but yet fondly beloved. Come and be again my wife, my all on earth. All, all is past of misery—all of joy shall be ours in time to come."

"Now, Sir William, forgive me?"

"Yes, yes," he uttered; "before God and these witnesses I forgive you."

"Then my hour has come. I thank you, Sir William. Come and see me in my room soon, William Farewell." And as Radston

thus spoke, he arose from his chair and feebly tottered from the room.

* * * * *

O, how the heart of Alice beat as she rested now upon Sir William's bosom, and murmured forth the sweet name of—"Father." And how her soul thrilled when Albion drew her aside and kissed her—and then when Thomas came and called her "*Sister*." And then Lord Tiverton kissed her, too, and he whispered in her ear that he would be a father to her. O; it was joyful—it was pleasure even to delirium!

* * * * *

The old baronet went up on the following day to see Harold Radston, but the beggared man had gone from earth.

The two smugglers were tried for numerous other crimes besides that of abducting Alice, and they were transported for life.

Belinda Warner called Sir William to her room, and begged him to send her to the home of a distant relative in the northern part of Cumberland. Sir William never saw her again, but he heard from her—and she was a better woman.

Time passed on, and Albion Tiverton did his duty most faithfully in the sphere he was called upon to fill.

He and Tom had grown more steady now, but on that evening they were men indeed, for Sir William and Lord Tiverton were the children. Those two old men were so happy that they fairly became childish in their quaint demonstrations. They kissed Alice as soon as

she had become a wife, and they really cried with joy.

But there was one who took the joys of this almost heavenly occasion most deeply, soberly to heart. It was the mother; she did not forget that the life upon which her sweet child was entering had its stern duties as well as its joys, and that those very duties, when truly done, constitute our highest and most lasting good.

And there they stood—the aged couple, and the young; the husband and wife who had seen so much of earth's most bitter sorrow, and the husband and wife who were just to commence the active work of wedded life.

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